THE

TRUE ALARM.

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TRUE ALARM.

IN the firſt part of this undertaking we have illuſtrated the value of Bengal, by a compariſon ſtated betwixt it and America: and notwithſtanding that the nature of this compariſon did not afford occaſion to diſplay, at large, the intrinſic and inherent worth of Bengal; yet, by ſo much as is there ſpecified, it plain-

ly appears, that the reſources of that country are exceeding great; and that theſe reſources become, wholly and entirely, the property of Britain; by reaſon that her dominion there is abſolute, unlimited, and implicit. We have likewiſe, in the courſe of that compariſon, ſet forth the merits of this branch of empire, in reſpect to ſtability of dominion, and facility of maintaining poſſeſſion.

It is indeed apparent that Bengal is moſt richly endowed with every quality that can conſtitute worth in a dependent dominion; and that, if duly attended to, it is capable of being rendered the nobleſt and moſt truly valuable acquiſition that was ever made by any ſtate. Therefore this proper and intrinſic value renders Bengal an object of the higheſt importance

portance to Britain. But that importance is ſtill farther enhanced to Britain, by two additional conſiderations, of no ſmall weight: the firſt of which is, Her own preſent embarraſſed ſituation; the burden of her expence being of late ſo grievouſly encreaſed, whilſt her ordinary reſources are greatly diminiſhed: the ſecond is, The probable or rather certain conſequence of her permitting this branch of dominion to be wreſted from her; which is, that it, together with its commerce, will become an addition to the wealth and power of an already formidable rival.

An object thus valuable in itſelf, and recommended by two ſuch preſſing conſiderations, doth certainly demand the utmoſt degree of attention that Britain can poſſibly beſtow upon it. Hath

not this nation then great reaſon to complain that her intereſt is neglected by government, which hath delivered over this important branch of her concerns, like a matter below its notice, to the abſolute diſcretion of a ſmall body of merchants, whom ſhe herſelf eſtabliſhed into a company for the purpoſes of commerce only?

However, as we have no intention to reflect upon the paſt conduct of government, we ſhall not here enquire into the propriety of thoſe motives that may have induced it to devolve the charge of this ſovereign concern upon that company: it ſhall ſuffice to ſay, that an agreement, on this head, hath been twice repeated; the firſt having been for only two years; and for that, as well as other reaſons, far leſs exceptionable than this ſecond,

cond, which hath been renewed for the term of five years.

But we think it abſolutely neceſſary to obſerve, that, upon whatever conſideration this charge may have been granted by government, or upon whatever grounds it may be ſuppoſed to be held by that company; whether by virtue of any claim, implied, in part, by their commercial charter, and confirmed by this new contract; or whether it is totally derived, from either the one, or the other, of thoſe grants; yet government hath not, nay it cannot, in either of theſe caſes, diveſt itſelf of the right to ſuperintend, and carefully examine, the manner in which the company conducts the charge of that important branch of national concern.

For if we muſt ſuppoſe this ſovereignty

vereignty to be held by the company, through any implied title, arising in part, or even in whole, from their commercial charter: yet this company doth not poſſeſs even the commerce itſelf of any proper or inherent right; ſhe holds it only in truſt, for the whole nation of Great Britain, which is the original, paramount, and perpetual proprietor; and by virtue of a temporary grant made by the government of the nation, upon a ſpecial condition, even *public utility*.* Such therefore, being the terms upon which the company holds this commerce, the ſupreme government hath a right, and

* When the Engliſh nation firſt engaged in the trade to India, it was judged, that this very diſtant commerce might be carried on to greater public advantage, by only a part of the community

and it is bound, by the nature of that truſt repoſed in it by the nation, to exert this right at all times, even during the term of the charter, to narrowly inſpect the commercial conduct of the company; and to compel it to act up, in every

community, formed into one body; and thus holding but one intereſt; than if it was left open and common to the whole; who, by dividing themſelves into a number of different parties and intereſts, might claſh, oppoſe, and ruin one another; and by that injure the general weal. With a view, therefore, to *public utility*, and not for the private emolument of individuals, the nation thought proper to inſtitute an Eaſt India company; to which ſhe granted a charter, excluding for a certain ſpace of time any other part of the community from interfering in that commerce.

Public utility was therefore the fundamental baſis of this charter; being the end for which the nation originally granted, and the condition on which the company received it. And to the ſame end, and on the like condition this charter hath been frequently renewed to the company.

ry reſpect, to the fundamental pactum of its covenant with the nation: and if it ſhall appear, that the company is through any means become incapable of fulfilling its part of the contract, government hath then a right to revoke and reclaim the charter: for to ſuppoſe that the ſupreme government of the nation hath not this right, is the ſame thing as ſuppoſing that it hath not the power; which is an abſurdity.

Now if it is ſo much the duty of government to keep a ſtrict eye over even the commercial conduct of the company, how much more neceſſary is it to carefully watch over their management of this ſovereign charge? which, beſides its being greatly more difficult, is incomparably more important and extenſive; ſeeing that it doth not only

only comprehend the whole intereſt of the Britiſh nation in that branch of her dominion; which, as hath been ſhewn, is of the higheſt moment to her, and of which the commerce itſelf forms only a ſmall part: but it likewiſe includes the whole and entire intereſts of the natives of that dominion, who are become ſubjects of Britain; and who, by their dutiful demeanor and great utility, do moſt certainly claim from her the moſt tender attention, and generous treatment.

On the other hand, if we are to conſider the title by which this company holds that ſovereignty, as derived either wholly or in part from this new contract, yet government doth, in this caſe, ſtill retain the ſame right, and is

bound by the ſame duty, to inſpect the conduct of the company. For the ſubject here granted, is in its nature periſhable; it is liable, during the term of this leaſe, to be either ruined and annihilated by the rapaciouſneſs, or to be wreſted from, and finally loſt to the proprietor, through the miſconduct, and neglect of the temporary occupier; nor hath the nation any other ſecurity againſt ſuch loſs of her property than this interpoſition of her government. So that, if we could ſuppoſe that government had by this contract precluded itſelf from the right and power of checking and ſurveying the premiſes, it would follow, that government had actually entered into an agreement, which, for the conſideration of

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* five years *dedomagement*, or 2,000,000l. ſterling, ſubjects the nation to a greatly more than equal chance of abſolutely alienating, or totally denuding herſelf of a property that produces at preſent 2,400,000l. ſterling annually; and which may, at the loweſt reckoning, continue to afford her, *in perpetuum*, 1,300,000l. ſterling, per annum. But reaſon and common ſenſe forbid us to ſuppoſe that government either could, or would, thus ſacrifice the intereſt of the nation: therefore the right of inſpection doth, likewiſe in this caſe, remain entire to government.

It

* Suppoſing this dedomagement to have been paid up for this number of years: though, in fact, it is far from being certain that it will be forth-coming for even one year beyond the current one.

It is then evident, that, in which ever ſenſe we conſider this grant, government hath a right to ſuperintend and inſpect the manner of executing it. But hath government exerted this right in behalf of the nation? Hath it taken any proper meaſures to come at a true information of the ſtate of either the government, or the defence of that dominion? Aſſuredly not: for it will never be allowed, that a curſory review of the company's books of accounts; or a ſlight and vague report made by this company, which is itſelf the party concerned, can communicate ſuch information. Yet this is the whole that hath been done on this head: ſo that, for any thing government can poſſibly know to the contrary, the native ſubjects of this

this dominion may be groaning under the oppreſſion of intolerable tyranny; ſpoiled and impoveriſhed of their wealth; their manufactures and commerce ruined: and, what is more, the country itſelf, notwithſtanding all the advantages of ſituation, expoſed, through neglect, to the hazard of being wreſted from Britain, by the firſt aſſault of an enemy.

Nevertheleſs we do not mean, by any thing that is here advanced, to traduce government, or to accuſe it of a wilful neglect; being extremely ſenſible that government hath been prevented from diſcharging its duty to the nation, in more reſpects than this, by the wicked attempts of certain men, who are infinitely more ſolicitous to prevent their country from receiving

ceiving benefit through the administration of others, than they would be to promote her welfare, were they themſelves the miniſters. Our ſole aim is, with all due reſpect, to arouſe government to a juſt exertion of its legal authority; and, thereby, to preſent itſelf, in ſpite of thoſe obſtacles, as a ſhield againſt the danger that threatens this moſt important branch of national intereſt. And, in order to farther inculcate this purpoſe, we ſhall take the liberty to add, that the nation of Britain, if ſhe ſhall be deprived of this valuable property, through either the negligence, incapacity, or rapaciouſneſs of thoſe who are entruſted with the charge of it, will moſt certainly expreſs her indignation, not againſt them, but againſt

againſt her own government; becauſe on it alone, ſhe hath devolved her power, and the charge of her rights; and alſo, that, in the caſe of ſuch deprivation, it will be but a puſillanimous excuſe for government to plead, that it was deterred from diſcharging its duty to the nation, by the clamour of a few wicked, or ſelfiſh individuals. Nor will the pretext of lenity, or delicacy of interfering with what is, by a previous grant of the nation, become private property, be at all admitted: becauſe, notwithſtanding that which for the ſake of argument hath been ſuppoſed above, it is plain that this ſovereignty cannot poſſibly form any part of the grant made by the nation in the company's commercial charter; ſeeing it was ſo far from exiſting, that

that it was not even dreamt of, at the time of either originally granting, or laſt renewing this charter. But this new and particular contract, diſtinctly ſeparating the ſovereignty from the commerce, renders the ſovereign grant an entire act of the preſent government: and, by that, puts it out of the power of this government to avail itſelf of the pretext of lenity.

Having therefore evinced, that government poſſeſſeth a right to inſpect the conduct of this ſovereign concern, we have next to demonſtrate the propriety and neceſſity of ſuch inſpection. And, for this end, we ſhall, after explaining the compoſition and conſtitution of that body which is entruſted with the ſupreme charge of this ſovereignty, preſent a juſt

view of the actual ſtate of government in Bengal, reſpecting the juriſdiction, police, finances, and defence.

As to the Eaſt India company, which is to be conſidered as the ſupreme head of that ſovereignty, we have already mentioned the end and purpoſe for which it was originally inſtituted by the nation: and now we are to explain the nature of its compoſition and conſtitution; in order that we may, thereby, be enabled to diſcover how far it is qualified for the due execution of this ſovereign t.uſt. During the infancy of the Indian trade, this company conſiſted of a ſmall body of real merchants; who, it may be preſumed, did each of them adviſe and direct in the management of the common concern: but, as this trade came

to be extended, a larger ſtock was required; and men, women, children, foreigners, as well as natives, were admitted to hold a ſhare. It then became neceſſary, for obvious reaſons, that the conduct of affairs ſhould be committed to only a few perſons, choſen, annually, out of the whole body, by the voice of the other proprietors of ſtock. Theſe are ſtiled directors of the company's affairs, and are in number 24: of which, one is nominated chairman, and another deputy-chairman. No one is qualified for the office of director, unleſs he holds a ſhare of 2000l. real ſtock: nor is any proprietor admitted to vote, in the election of directors, or in any other matter, who doth not poſſeſs 500l. This court of directos forms the executive governmenr

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of the company: though the proprietors have a right to ſuperintend or examine any meaſure; and, to this end, the directors are obliged to ſummon a general court, upon the requiſition of any nine properly qualified proprietors.

In proportion as the company's commercial importance advanced, ſo did the authority of the court of directors encreaſe; till, at laſt, it became ſo far poſſeſſed of the whole power, that this court might, not improperly, be termed the company. For ſo long as commerce continued to be the ſole buſineſs of the company, the ſtate of their ſtock was fixt, and ſteady; and, for that reaſon, there was little or no changing in the body of proprietors; who being ſenſible that the nature of their

concerns was plain and ſimple, placed an implicit confidence in the capacity and integrity of their directors, leaving the management entirely in their hands, and quietly receiving the dividend upon their ſeveral proportions of ſtock, at the time it became due. Nay for ſome years after the company came to be engaged in war, and in the politics of India, this confidence, in the directors, continued to ſubſiſt; ſo that the proprietors did very rarely make uſe of their privilege of calling general courts.

But no ſooner was intelligence received of the rupture in Bengal, with Coſſim Alli Cawn, and the conſequences that enſued thereon, than it was perceived, that a wide field was opened for plunder and conqueſt: and then the ambitious

bitious and avaricious began to enter into this ſtock, with a view of advancing their own particular ends. Diſcord and faction now took place of unanimity: different parties contended with violence for the direction of thoſe concerns, that, already, promiſed immenſe power and wealth: and that iniquitous practice, till then unknown to this company, even the ſplitting of ſtock, in order to qualify votes, was at that time firſt ſet on foot.

On the company's aſſuming what they term the Dewannè of Bengal, the ſtate of their ſtock underwent a ſtill greater change; being now ſubjected to the influence of every piece of news, whether true or feigned; to-day riſing to a mighty pitch, and to-morrow ſinking again. The ſpirit

rit of conteſt exceeded all bounds; mighty ſums of ſtock were purchaſed from foreigners, for the purpoſe of multiplying votes; and ſtill more taken up on what is termed continuation, and other jobbing plans, all of them highly injurious to the public weal.*

This

* Nor is this a trifling evil; the company's ſtock roſe on that occaſion to an immoderate degree, and it is well known, that ſome hundred thouſand pounds of this ſtock were bought up from foreigners, at that advanced price; ſo that theſe foreigners received from Britain, at the rate of 280l. for that which they may have purchaſed from her at only 100l. poſſibly at leſs. This difference upon ſuch a large purchaſe muſt have amounted to a very great ſum; and it is difficult to determine how far this ſpirit might have extended, had not the legiſlature interpoſed its authority to reſtrain the dividend. But ſo long as that ſtock continues to fluctuate in this extraordinary manner, ſo long will Britain continue to play this loſing game; for every piece of good news will raiſe the price of ſtock; and thoſe who have views of profiting by the politics of the company, will then be the

This company hath now become divided into two ſpecies of proprietors: the one of which is termed ſimple; becauſe they have no views of reaping any benefit from their ſtock, otherwiſe than by the dividend: the other ſort of proprietors is termed compound; becauſe they have views of profiting otherwiſe than by the common ſtock. At the head of this latter diviſion, are they who aim at places of power and truſt, in ordering and directing the ſovereignty: and theſe are the men, who to ſerve a turn, employ enormous

the purchaſers, whilſt foreigners, who have nothing to do in thoſe politics, will be the ſellers; and ſo *vice verſa*.

Now this ſovereignty, forming a part of the company's ſtock, is the cauſe of that extraordinary fluctuation: ſo that ever whilſt this ſovereignty remains veſted in the company, it will always afford to foreigners an eaſy opportunity to drain Britain of large ſums.

mous ſums in making temporary purchaſes of this ſtock; which they afterwards parcel out into ſhares of 500l. each of which ſhares qualifies a voter: and thus one of theſe ambitious monied men, who may hold 100,000l. ſtock, and who, by the rules of the charter, is entitled to but one ſingle voice for that whole amount, ſhall, by this ſplitting, make out of that ſum no leſs than 200 votes upon a ballot. Beſides theſe, there is another ſort of compound proprietors, who purchaſe, on their own account, one or more qualifications in this ſtock, for the purpoſe of entitling themſelves to the right of demanding, in conſideration of their vote, ſome one favour from thoſe who poſſeſs the power of beſtowing it: and theſe may be ſtiled ſubordi-

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nate compound proprietors, as being ever ready to vote by the order of their patrons. Theſe qualified and ſubordinate proprietors compoſe by far the greater part of this company; inſomuch that upon a general ballot there may not be, of the whole number that votes upon the queſtion, more than one ſixth part who employ their own judgment, or have the leaſt freedom of choice.

This extraordinary change, in the form and conſtitution of that company, is the conſequence of their interfering in matters of ſovereignty. All manner of confidence in their executive government is now at an end: every meaſure is diſputed, and rediſputed, in general courts of the proprietors: even this is become abſolutely neceſſary, the preſent

charge being infinitely too important to be left to the diſcretion of 24 directors; though, at the ſame time, there is but little reaſon to expect that matters will be at all mended by theſe general courts; where the ambitious and avaricious, who regard only the momentary views of their own immediate profit, will ever prevail over the few who may retain ſome reſpect for the laſting intereſt of the company and of their country*.

* But the frequency of theſe general courts, though it can ſcarcely anſwer any good purpoſe, may yet prove of mighty detriment: for as, in theſe courts, the proprietors have a right, and do actually make uſe of that right, to call for all papers of intelligence, and to examine into every meaſure propoſed, it is plain that foreigners, even enemies to this company and ſtate, do thereby acquire an opportunity to fully inform themſelves of all theſe matters. So that here can be no ſecrecy, of either intelligence or

To

To a body compoſed of ſuch parts is committed the ſovereign charge of governing and defending Bengal. Nevertheleſs the compoſition of the company is, in this caſe, of far leſs conſequence, than is the nature of its conſtitution; as being, in the firſt place, itſelf a ſubject, poſſeſſing neither ſupreme legiſlative nor even judicial authority, over that ſubſtitution of fellow ſubjects, by which it is neceſſitatated, on account of the diſtance, to adminiſter the government of that dominion: and as this diſtance doth at the ſame time

meaſures: a circumſtance ſufficient of itſelf to relax the ſinews of the ſtrongeſt government. Yet this defect cannot be remedied, ſo long as that ſovereignty remains in the hands of the company, without committing a violent outrage on private property; and at ſame time incurring an evil ſtill more dangerous than the diſeaſe.

render it impoſſible for the company to immediately direct or reſtrain the meaſures of this ſubſtitute, it follows, that this ſubſtitute, being through theſe two cauſes totally exempted from either the immediate controul or retroſpective authority of the ſovereign, becomes altogether abſolute, deſpotic, and arbitrary in the execution of this ſovereign office.

In the ſecond place, this company acting, in that country of which it is the ſovereign, in the capacity of a merchant, the ſubſtitute adminiſtration of the company doth, of conſequence, act there in this double capacity. So that the deſpotic rulers of Bengal are themſelves merchants; and that, not only in behalf of the ſovereign, but on their own private

vate account. A circumſtance deſtructive to the intereſt of that country which derives its whole reſources from commerce alone.

In the third place, the company being itſelf, a ſubject depending upon the government of that country where it reſides, for its own protection and exiſtence, is totally devoid of that quality which conſtitutes the very being of ſovereignty; even the power of protection. And thus the protection of this dominion reſts, not upon the ruling ſovereign, but upon another power.

Theſe defects in the conſtitution and being of this ſovereign company, together with the conſequences that reſult therefrom, will be more fully ſet forth in the courſe of reviewing the actual ſtate of government in Bengal: which

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we ſhall uſher in, by a deſcription of the artificial and real parts that go to compoſe this government.

The artificial part of this government is the Nabob: who is ſome one native, upon whom the company is pleaſed to beſtow that title, together with the enormous penſion of fifty two lack of rupees, about ſix hundred thouſand pounds, per annum. This Nabob is a meer cypher in the government; for he is not permitted to exerciſe, in his own right, any public act of authority; nor doth the exiſtence of this office anſwer any one uſeful or honourable purpoſe; having been inſtituted for ends of a very different nature. For theſe men, who were deputed to aſſume, or more properly to accept of, this ſovereignty for the company, being conſcious that, if it ſhould be

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held by any directly ſupreme title, it would be immediately claimed by the Britiſh nation, they, in order to evade this claim, preſerved the appearance of the ancient form of government, by keeping up the farce of a native Nabob; who was to paſs upon this nation for the actual ſovereign of Bengal: and at the ſame time they directed the Mogul, who by the by is Mogul of only the Engliſh Eaſt India company, to ſtile this company his *Dewanne** in Bengal. So that this nominal Nabob owes his exiſtence to the worthy purpoſe of deceiving the Britiſh nation; which was preſumed to be ſufficiently ignorant

* An office which had ſubſiſted in thoſe provinces while ſubject to the Mogul emperors, and which was was ſubordinate to the Soubah or Nabob; ſignifying collector of the royal revenues.

of India affairs to ſwallow the deceit, and though it is extremely probable that, if domeſtic concerns had not ſo thoroughly engroſſed the Britiſh government that it could afford but little attention to thoſe external affairs, this groſs fineſſe would ſcarcely have ſerved the turn; yet, as matters then ſtood, government was ſo very willing to be deceived, that the company hath ſcarcely had occaſion to avail itſelf of this device. So that, thus far, the nominal Nabob hath proved an uſeleſs encumbrance: and this is the reaſon, as is ſuppoſed, why the company hath cut him off ſeven weeks allowance in the year. Neverthelèſs he ſtill ſerves one very material, though a very baſe, purpoſe: for when the company's ſubſtitute hath occaſion to execute any

any public act of government that may be incompatible with the Engliſh laws and conſtitution, the name of the nabob ſtands then in good ſtead: or if this ſubſtitute is diſpoſed to exerciſe his perſonal authority upon any native individual, in a manner repugnant to theſe laws, the culprit is then diſpatched to the nabob; who punctually and literally executes his orders. And thus, we find, that, this ſhadow of a nabob ſerves to effectually exclude the natives of that country from the privilege of the Engliſh laws; to which, as being Britiſh ſubjects, they are entitled.

It is poſſible, that, beſides theſe public reaſons, there might be one of a more private nature, for accommodating this Egyptian Apis with ſuch an enormous penſion.

But, be that as it will, it is certain, that the nominal nabob bears no ſhare in the government of that country; farther than as a convenient tool, to execute ſuch purpoſes of the real government, as it dares not avow in its own character.

The real government of Bengal is executed by the Engliſh Eaſt India company's ſubſtitute adminiſtration, which reſides at Calcutta, this company's original preſidency; and conſiſts of a governor, with ten or eleven members of council. Three, or more of theſe counſellors, are, moſt commonly, abſent at ſubordinate factories: and out of thoſe who remain is compoſed a diſtinct board, ſtiled the ſelect committee. Which board, was firſt inſtituted by the company, at the

time they came to be engaged in war, for the purpoſe of directing only ſuch operations as required ſecrecy. But, as all the members of this board are, at the ſame time, members of council, it is natural to imagine, that the ſelect committee will extend its department, to every matter of any importance, in the political government; and will thus leave but a ſmall ſhare of conſequence to the council. The governor is always preſident of this committee: where, as it conſiſts of only three or four members, his authority is but little ſubjected to controul. Theſe governors and counſellors are ſuch as were originally intended and educated for the commercial ſervice of the company: they are ſent out to India at the age of ſixteen; and going out thus

young, to a country where gaiety and jollity prevails, it is not to be expected that they will have great opportunity of improving their underſtanding, by either ſpeculation or example. Moreover, ſince the time that the company came to be engaged in matters of ſovereignty, fortunes have been acquired, in a moſt rapid manner, by their ſervants in India; which has occaſioned a very quick rotation; ſo that, of late, they have arrived at the higheſt truſts, in a very early time of life.

This ſubſtitute adminiſtration, ſuch as it hath been deſcribed, directs the whole machine of that government, both civil and military, in all its departments, with a power as unlimited as thought can conceive. For the two parties, that are the principals in this concern

concern, namely, the Britiſh nation and the native ſubjects of that dominion, do not, at all, interfere in the buſineſs of government: the firſt having voluntarily withdrawn herſelf; and the latter, whoſe diſpoſition we have deſcribed to be pliant and ſubmiſſively obedient, are, like true eaſtern ſlaves, excluded from the moſt diſtant voice in either legiſlation or execution. So that this ſubſtitute is ſubjected to no manner of controul, ſaving that of the Eaſt India company, which, through the cauſes that have been mentioned, is totally impotent; extending, in even its own immediate concerns, to caſes of only the moſt general nature.

For the diſtance betwixt Britain, the ſeat of the company's reſidence; and Bengal, the country

try governed, is ſo great, that the courſe of a correſpondence is rarely performed, on even extraordinary occaſions, in leſs than one year; in the ordinary way it is 15 or 16 months: that is to to ſay, the anſwer to a letter, ſent from either of thoſe countries to the other, ſeldom arrives in leſs time than hath been mentioned. In conſequence of which, we may perceive, that, in every ſuch caſe as is not previouſly provided for by fixed form and rule, the governor of Bengal muſt be left to guide himſelf by his own diſcretion. Now with reſpect to commerce, it is poſſible for the company to preſcribe, in Europe, ſuch regulations as ſhall ſerve, in almoſt every caſe, for the conduct of that branch of their concerns in India; becauſe it proceeds

ceeds in a certain uniform channel. But the nature of political concerns is extremely different; theſe are altogether variable and uncertain, being ſubject to innumerable accidents, producing changes ſudden and unforeſeen; and, for that reaſon, cannot, in almoſt any one inſtance, be provided for before-hand: nor, on the other hand, is it to be imagined, that the governor, who is entruſted with the direction of thoſe concerns, can delay taking his meaſures, until he hath demanded, and received inſtructions, on the head, from Europe; becauſe the delay of even a day may, in theſe matters, prove of irreparable detriment. It is therefore evident, that this diſtance puts it out of the power of the company to either direct or reſtrain

ſtrain the meaſures of their governor, in the conduct of their political concerns. And, in like manner as the diſtance deprives this company of an immediate coercive authority over their ſubſtitute in Bengal; ſo doth the nature of their condition, as being fellow-ſubjects, render their retroſpective authority over him, impotent and ineffectual. For in the caſe of his abuſing their truſt, they poſſeſs no power, in themſelves, of puniſhing him; they muſt, like other ſubjects, apply for redreſs, againſt him, in the ordinary courſe of law: and, if we conſider the nature of the evidence required there to convict him; and the difficulty, or rather impracticability of their obtaining ſuch evidence, ſeeing, that all thoſe who are capable of giving evidence

evidence againſt him, in theſe matters, are themſelves parties in the offence; together, with a number of other circumſtances to their diſadvantage, we muſt perceive, that this ſubſtitute can have but little reaſon to apprehend that his conſtituents will even attempt to take this courſe with him.

So that this ſovereign company being totally incapable of either reſtraining their ſubſtitute in the immediate execution of his charge, or of judging and puniſhing him in the ſequel, he acts, altogether, independent of their authority; inſomuch, that their own proper intereſts lie entirely at his mercy. For he hath not only the power of impoſing and collecting the revenues of that country; but he is likewiſe the diſcretional appropri-

ator of thoſe revenues; ſeeing, that he is the ſole arbiter of the propriety or neceſſity of war and of peace*: and we find, by experience, that theſe governors can never be at a loſs for, at leaſt, a plauſible pretext to enter into war; and that this war, being once commenced, muſt be proſecuted by the company, in the ſame manner as if it had been undertaken by their own expreſs order. But the expence of ſuch wars, commenced and conducted by thoſe governors, for the ſole end of gratifying their own avarice and that

* On this head of war and peace; it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the company poſſeſſeth other dominions, diſtinct from Bengal; the governors of which have the ſame *diſcretional power* of making war: but the expence of theſe wars is chiefly defrayed from the revenues of Bengal.

that of their aſſociates, muſt form a gulph, deep enough, to ſwallow up the whole revenues, and, poſſibly, ſomewhat from the profits of trade. And when one of theſe governors hath thus outrageouſly proſtituted the intereſt of his conſtituents, the only puniſhment, in their power, is, to diſmiſs him from their ſervice: for which puniſhment, he is completely prepared, as being ready, of his own accord, to embark, with a princely fortune, for his mother country; where he ſets the company at defiance; ſeeing, that, in an ordinary court of juſtice, they could convict him of nothing more than an error of judgment.

Now, if this governor is ſo very arbitrary in his management of the concerns of his own con-

ſtituents, who form the only body to which he is reſponſible for his conduct; how deſpotic may we ſuppoſe him to be in his government of the native ſubjects of Bengal, who poſſeſs neither the means nor the ſpirit to reſent or repel injuries? We are now to enquire into the nature of this government, in the ſeveral reſpects that have been mentioned. And, firſt, with regard to the juriſdiction, and general police*.

The

* We may here remark, for the ſake of form, that there is a mayor's court eſtabliſhed at Calcutta, by the royal authority; with full power to judge in matters of property. But the governor and council appoint the members of this court; who, in general, are ſervants of the company; and do thus hold an immediate dependence on the governor, who hath the diſpoſal of all places of profit. Therefore the governor hath it ever in his power to influence a majority of thoſe members: and, for that reaſon, we cannot expect that this court will ever

The interior juriſdiction of Bengal is, ſo far as form, nearly the ſame with that which ſubſiſted under the nabobs: in ſpirit it differs widely; being now ſubjected to the controul of foreigners, inſtead of natives. But, in order to attain a proper underſtanding of the preſent ſtate of this juriſdiction, and of the police, more particularly the commerce

ever interpoſe its authority, in favour of individuals, againſt the oppreſſion of the governor: or that it will, in any other ſhape, oppoſe his will. There is, likewiſe, a general ſeſſions of oyer and terminer, held quarterly at Calcutta: but here the governor and council preſide as judges; and, as ſuch, take upon them to adjourn the court, if troubleſome. We may likewiſe add, that theſe courts having been eſtabliſhed at a time when the company's juriſdiction was confined to the limits of their factory at Calcutta, the buſineſs of thoſe courts doth, at this day, extend but little beyond theſe limits; they may, therefore, be ſaid to form the juriſdiction of Calcutta only.

commerce of Bengal, we muſt look back ſo far as the revolution of government effected, in that country, by the Engliſh arms, in 1757: at which time they acquired an unbounded influence there.

For, by the defeat of Sur Rajud Dowla, the Engliſh became abſolute maſters of Bengal; and might, on that occaſion, if they had ſo pleaſed, have ſeized the government of it to themſelves. But ſeveral circumſtances rendered that an improper ſeaſon; therefore the ſubſtitute power of the company thought proper to confer the nabobſhip on Meer Jaffeir. This, however, ſeems to have been but a temporary expedient, meant to ſubſiſt only until the pleaſure of the company ſhould be known: and as the company did not, during the whole adminiſtration

tion of this nabob, come to any fixed determination, reſpecting the particular form of government to be eſtabliſhed there, that ſpace of time may be properly termed an interregnum. But, during this interregnum, the ſeveral ſervants of the company, who, on the ſcore of commerce, are diſperſed through every part of that country, perceiving that the fences of the native government were overthrown by the force of the Engliſh arms, began to conſider themſelves as ſuperior to its authority and at liberty to act as they pleaſed. Towards the latter part of this interregnum, they not only ſet the authority of the country government at defiance, but, in order to ſtrengthen the power of commercial tyranny, uſurped, each of them in his own

own diſtrict, the right of juriſdiction; and even communicated this right to the meaneſt of their ſervants. By this means they eſtabliſhed the moſt iniquitous influence over the natives; whom they excluded from the privilege of trade, and oppreſſed at pleaſure: in particular, they wreſted from the native merchants, and engroſſed to themſelves, the whole inland trade; from which all Europeans had ever, till then, been totally excluded. This trade conſiſts in the ſale of certain articles, that are, to theſe natives, the neceſſaries of life: ſo that this monopoly, in the hands of a few foreigners, ſtruck at the very exiſtence of manufacture, and commerce; and even of population.

The then directors of the company,

pany, on receiving intelligence of theſe outrageous proceedings of their ſervants in Bengal, were grievouſly alarmed: for they perceived that, if a ſpeedy ſtop was not put to their violence, the country muſt be inevitably ruined: but at ſame time they were greatly embarrſſed in their choice of the meaſures that might be moſt proper to this end: for, on the one hand, they could not expect to effect a reformation of theſe abuſes by the means of their own ſubſtitute adminiſtration, which was itſelf the author of them: and, on the other hand, to inveſt the country government with a power ſufficient to reſtrain their own ſubſtitute, was an expedient replete with danger, becauſe that government might poſſibly employ this power to the prejudice

of the company itſelf. Nevertheleſs, there being no alternative, they made choice of this latter meaſure, as of the leſs evil: hoping to qualify the circumſtance of danger, by keeping up a force ſufficient to awe, as well as to protect the country government: and, to defray the charge of this force, they aſſumed to themſelves a certain part of the revenues.

The execution of this meaſure was committed to the then governor of Bengal, in whom the directors could repoſe a thorough confidence: and the firſt ſtep which he took, was to ſet aſide Meer Jaffeir; who, being indeed a man of mean talents, and void of reſolution, was judged altogether incapable of exerting the energy of government. But this very revolution, having been effected

fected with the utmoſt facility, diſcovered the extreme low ſtate to which the country government was reduced; and convinced the governor, that nothing under a very extraordinary addition of power, could enable it to repreſs the licentiouſneſs of the Engliſh: he therefore made uſe of every means to ſtrengthen the hands of the New Nabob. But the other ſervants of the company, perceiving his deſign, and enraged at the proſpect of having the prey ſnatched out of their hands, joined unanimouſly in oppoſing his meaſures: and, by this junction, had influence ſufficient to not only ſuperſede his authority, but alſo to engage the company in a war with the country government. In fine, theſe ſervants employed the company's own

force to oppoſe the company's own meaſure, and by prevailing in that quarrel, they confirmed their own uſurpation and tyranny above controul. Nor had the company the power to puniſh any one of thoſe ſervants, for thus outraging their authority: they did indeed attempt it, by commencing a proſecution at law: but conſcious of their own impotence, they ſuddenly dropt it.

Some time after this the ſovereign government of Bengal was aſſumed for the company themſelves: and the execution of this government did, of conſequence, fall into the hands of their ſubſtitute adminiſtration. But if the natives of that country were oppreſſed by the ſervants of the company in the manner that hath been mentioned, at a time when they

they enjoyed at leaſt the appearance of protection in the exiſtence of a native government, how much more unbounded muſt that oppreſſion be, now that the whole power of this government is veſted in thoſe very oppreſſors, without check or limitation of any kind? Can any ſort of police exiſt in a country, where ſuch as are not veſted by the ſupreme government with even the ſhadow of juridicial authority, aſſume to themſelves the power of magiſtrates? And on what footing muſt the commerce of that country ſtand, where, in every diſtrict of it, there reſides one or two foreign merchants acting with the power of deſpotic ſovereigns? It is almoſt vain to deſcend to particulars; for, ſetting aſide the enormous ſums amaſſed by thoſe who have

have borne ſome ſhare in the detail of this government, the very large fortunes acquired of late by even boys in the commercial ſervice of the company, are a ſtronger proof, than a thouſand inſtances would be, of the depravity and corruption of this government*. It will

* That we may not however be ſaid to deal entirely in general aſſertions, we ſhall here ſpecify a few inſtances of oppreſſion in the commercial department, which are undeniably authenticated; and by theſe, we ſhall be enabled to form a gueſs of other matters. In the firſt place, theſe ſervants of the company have ingroſſed the whole inland trade; which conſiſts in the ſale of ſalt, beetlenut, and tobacco: three articles, which, being produced in a particular quarter of the country, are from thence tranſported to the other parts that ſtand in want of them; and are ſo generally uſed by theſe natives, that they may be termed the common neceſſaries of life. This monopoly they at firſt uſurped from the native merchants, in defiance of the country government: and they afterwards confirmed this uſurpation, by force of arms, oppoſed to the authority of that government and of the company itſelf. On the

no

no doubt be ſaid that the company have ſent out the ſtrongeſt orders, inhibiting and reſtraining their ſervants from thus outraging the natives: but who is to carry theſe orders into execution? The governor and council; who are them-

aſſumption of the Dewanné, the governor and a few of the company's principal ſervants made a fair partition of this monopoly amongſt themſelves.

The company did afterwards reclaim that trade from their own ſervants, impoſed a duty of 30 per cent on it, and ordered it to be left open to every perſon paying this duty. But that order hath only ſerved to contract the monopoly, into a ſtill ſmaller number of hands than ever: though theſe monopolizers do vouchſafe to pay ſo much reſpect to the dignity of their maſters as, not openly to defy, but only to effectually evade their order, by carrying on that trade under the borrowed names of natives. The ſale of theſe neceſſaries of life, being thus engroſſed by a few men, who are themſelve. the deſpotic rulers of the country, andwho by that have it in their power to raiſe the price to what degree they pleaſe, is moſt certainly a monopoly of the moſt pernicions na-

ſelves

ſelves the principal infractors, and who, for that reaſon, cannot with any grace enforce the obſervance of them on the inferior ſervants. Theſe orders are therefore either totally contemned; or otherwiſe, if theſe ſervants are diſpoſed to

ture: with reſpect to the general commerce of Bengal, we ſhall point out the following conſequence. It is well known that the great demand for the manufactures of that country is principally owing to the cheapneſs of the commodity; and that this cheapneſs ariſes from the low price of labour. Now the price of labour is lower there, than in other countries, becauſe the neceſſaries of the labourer are not only few in number, but alſo becauſe theſe few neceſſaries were ever till of late extremely cheap. But it is evident that if the price of theſe neceſſaries is raiſed, the artiſan muſt, in order to come at them, proportionably advance the price of his labour, and by that encreaſe the price of the commodity; or otherwiſe he will encreaſe the quantity, by diminiſhing the quality, of his work; and as both theſe conſequences have actually enſued from this monopoly, it will ſerve to account, in part, for the decreaſe of this country's commerce.

pay

pay a compliment to their maſters, they only evade them; by making uſe of borrowed names, in any caſe where they do not chuſe to appear themſelves.

In the ſecoud place theſe ſervants of the company have engroſſed to themſelves the ſale of cotton; which is the rough material of the principal manufacture in Bengal. The greateſt part of this article is imported by ſea: and that afforded an eaſy opportunity to the mercantile ſovereigns of monopolizing it. However the natives had ſo much ſpirit as to attempt countermining this ſcheme, by importing large quantities of cotton over land, at a great expence: but the ſovereigns quickly put a ſtop to that, by iſſuing an edict againſt it in the name of the Nabob: ſo that they have now completely engroſſed this capital material.

In the third place theſe ſervants have taken an effectual method to monopolize the manufactured commodities of that country, by prohibiting every individual, (excepting the agents of the European companies,) from purchaſing any goods, unleſs he is poſſeſſed of an order, ſigned and ſealed by the Engliſh governor. In conſequence of this ordinance, the manufacturer is compelled to part with his goods to theſe engroſſers, at 15 to 50 per cent cheaper

We may therefore venture to affirm that theſe grievances will never be redreſſed by this company through the means of their ordinance ſubſtitute adminiſtration. And if any one is inclined to diſpute the truth of this aſſertion, we ſhall

than he could ſell them to an indifferent perſon: and the merchants of the inland countries, who uſed to reſort to Bengal, and there purchaſe merchandize to a great amount, being thus prohibited from a free trade, have now deſerted it. This diſtinction in favour of the European companies, whom theſe tyrants dare not injure, will account for Europe's not having felt the advanced price of the Bengal manufactures equally with other countries; but it muſt be remembered that Europe is not the only market for the commodities of Bengal.

Theſe are a few inſtances of the commercial tyranny exerciſed in Bengal: and it is indeed difficult to conceive how the commerce of any country can be more completely oppreſſed. All the edicts of theſe monopolizers are effectually enforced by means of the nominal Nabob: for if any individual preſumes to tranſgreſs them, he is, if a perſon of any mark, tranſmitted to the Nabob; where the ſlighteſt puniſhment in-

appeal

appeal to the conduct of the company itſelf; which had it retained the ſmalleſt confidence in theſe governors and counſellors, would never have had recourſe to that extraodinary and dangerous expedient, of ſending out ſupervifors to India, with thoſe truly dictatorial powers.

But at ſame time that the company, by granting that extraordinary commiſſion, do proclaim to the world their own ſenſe of the grievous abuſe of government in India, and of the high

flicted, is more grievous, to theſe ſuperſtitious people, than death itſelf: if the delinquent is a little fellow, that dares not complain, he is dealt with in a more ſummary way. Upon what footing would the commerce and finances of Britain ſtand, if the neceſſaries of life, the wool, and broad cloth were monopolized by a few foreigners; and theſe continually tranſmitting from the country that wealth which they acquired by theſe and other means?

unworthineſs of their own ſubſtitutes, yet it is to be preſumed, that, whatever they may give out, they themſelves are not ſo very weak, as to expect that the preſent dictatorial power will produce a whit better effect than that which, whether it was granted or aſſumed, was at leaſt exerciſed, on a former occaſion, in Bengal, by that man, from whoſe honour and abilities they formed the higheſt expectations, but who, inſtead of bettering the ſituation of their affairs, was obliged to leave them in a much worſe plight than he found them. A fact, the truth of which appears from their being neceſſitated, ſo ſoon after, to make a repetition of the ſame dangerous and fruitleſs expedient.——— Fruitleſs indeed! for if we were even to ſuppoſe, what cannot be expected

expected, that theſe ſuperviſors ſhould create a thorough reform of all abuſes, yet if the government is, upon the revocation of theſe ſuperviſors, reſtored to the ordinary ſubſtitution, it is evident that this reform will never ſubſiſt; but that abuſes will, along with government, revert to their wonted channel: and, on the other hand, if theſe ſuperviſing powers are to be continued, in the perſons of either theſe or of other men, they will, moſt certainly, degenerate into governors of a far more dangerous nature than the preſent. We may therefore conclude, that this ſuperviſing ſcheme will anſwer no other end, than that of trifling with the expectation of the Britiſh nation, until that object is completely ruined: and this other, of repairing, at the

the expence of that miſerable country, the fortunes of a few individuals, which have been ſhattered by the expenſive conteſt for place and power.

Such is the preſent ſtate of the juriſdiction, and general police, of Bengal: the conſequences that actually enſue therefrom, will appear more clearly, by a review of the financial government of that country.* By the financial government

* We ſhall not here animadvert upon that unaccountable meaſure, of collecting and accounting for thoſe revenues by the hands of one perſon, ſubjected to no manner of check: we ſhall only obſerve, that, however well it may be calculated for the particular purpoſes of individuals, it muſt be highly injurious to the general intereſt of the ſovereign; and at the ſame time grievouſly oppreſſive of the ſubject: at leaſt this will be ſuſpected, whilſt one of theſe collectors can collect for himſelf in the ſpace of three years a fortune of eight hundred thouſand pounds ſterling.

vernment of Bengal we would be underſtood to ſignify, not only the ſimple article of the revenues, but every other meaſure of her preſent government, that may, in any ſhape, affect her finances or general ſtock of wealth. And this review ſhall, for the ſake of perſpicuity, be ſtated in the form of an account current for one year, betwixt the export of ſpecie made from that country by means of her preſent government; and the import of ſpecie, or annual acceſſion of wealth, made to her through every channel: the difference, or balance of this account, being againſt her, will diſcover the annual diminution of her finances, or general ſtock of wealth.

With reſpect to revenue, we are informed that, in the year

1766

1766, the revenues of Bengal and Bahar, including what is termed the company's own lands, together with the duties upon merchandize, produced 4,128,246 l. ſterling.

We are likewiſe told, that the whole expences of government, civil and military, the tribute to the mogul, and the penſion to the nominal nabob, amounted to 2,806,250l. ſterling.—Conſequently there remained to the company, after defraying all manner of charges, a clear balance of 1,321,996 l. ſterling.* Nevertheleſs, as

* It will be ſaid that it is unfair to aſſume this year for our rule: becauſe the revenue hath, every year ſince, fallen ſhort of the ſum collected in 1766. But, if it is allowed that this amount of revenue was actually brought to account in 1766, that year is certainly the moſt proper for a rule; becauſe this amount leſs

as our buſineſs, here, is to exhibit the account of what is drawn from Bengal, in only the article of ſpecie; and as the company doth actually receive a part of her tribute in merchandize, for which ſhe makes payment in ſpecie out of the revenue; we ſhall deduct, from the above clear balance, ſo much

could not have been collected, in that year, unleſs the country had afforded it: and if the country did afford it for one year, it muſt, in the manner that revenue is raiſed there, ſtill continue to afford the ſame; unleſs in one of theſe two caſes, that either the mode and degree of taxation is diminiſhed; or, otherwiſe, that the country is, ſince then, become impoveriſhed, and, thereby, incapable of affording it. As to the firſt, it is certain that there is no abatement in the taxation; and if the ſecond is admitted to be the cauſe, then is the point that we contend for yielded up. We may, indeed, ſuppoſe one other cauſe for this diminution, ſuch as, either fraud, or falſification of accounts. But if either of theſe is the cauſe, it can make no odds in favour of the country.

much as ſhe returns out of it, for the value of her inveſtment; and this we ſhall ſuppoſe to be 250,000 l. ſterling, there will then remain 1,071,996 l. ſterling. Which ſum, being no longer requiſite or uſeful in Bengal, muſt be withdrawn from thence, to be employed elſewhere, on the company's neceſſary occaſions; or otherwiſe to be divided amongſt the proprietors, as clear gain. Nor is it, in the leaſt, material to enquire into the particular purpoſes on which this ſurplus revenue is employed, or the countries to which it is ſent: whether to ſupport the expences of war on the coaſt of Cormondel; to defray the charges of government at Bombay; to purchaſe cargoes in China; or to be divided in Europe, it is ſufficient that it

it is withdrawn from Bengal.

The next article on the export ſide of this finance account, is the amount of private fortunes acquired by Britiſh individuals in Bengal, and remitted from thence to Europe; either in ſpecie; or in what is equivalent to ſpecie, bills, which, being anſwered out of that ſpecie which Bengal would otherwiſe receive, creates a diminution of her annual ſpecie income, equal to, and exactly correſponding with ſuch remittances. The amount of Britiſh private fortunes remitted from Bengal, ſince the year 1757, may by a moderate computation, be eſtimated at 10,000,000l. ſterling, we ſhall here reckon it at 700,000l. per annum: which ſum is a dead balance againſt Bengal; becauſe few or none of thoſe individuals did,

originally, import ſpecie to her. And this private remittance of 700,000l. being added to 1,071, 996 l. the company's annual tribute, in ſpecie, amounts to 1,771,996 l. ſterling: which is the ſum of ſpecie annually exported from Bengal, by means of its government. But it muſt ſtill be remembered, that, over and above this, Bengal pays an additional tribute of 250,000 l. in merchandize.

We are, now, to ſtate the import ſide of this account, or the amount of ſpecie received annually by Bengal. And here we muſt obſerve, that Bengal poſſeſſeth no mines: commerce, or the ſale of her manufactures, is the ſole ſource of her wealth. The different branches of her commerce are very well known: though

though it may be difficult to exactly aſcertain the particular balance ariſing to her annually from each of thoſe branches: but we ſhall, for this reaſon, be careful to err on that ſide which is unfavourable to our argument; that is, to exceed conſiderably, rather than under-value.

The richeſt branch of the Bengal commerce was that with Europe, by the way of the cape of Good Hope. But, from that account, we are, now, to exclude Britain; becauſe ſhe, ſince the time ſhe aſſumed the ſovereignty, hath imported no ſpecie to Bengal; but pays her for her manufactures with her own money.—There now remains, firſt, France; which we ſhall ſuppoſe to import about 150,000l. in ſpecie; and

and this is allowing very largely. —The ſecond is Holland; which though ſhe exports a larger quantity of Bengal merchandize than France, yet ſhe doth not import ſo much ſpecie; becauſe ſhe deals greatly in truck or barter, with the commodities of not only Europe, but of Japan, China, Java, and the ſeveral ſpice iſlands; we cannot, therefore, allow for Holland more than 100,000l. in ſpecie.— Beſides theſe, there is Denmark and Portugal: their trade is inconſiderable; we ſhall value it at 60,000l. And theſe three ſums, amounting to 310,000l. is the ſpecie balance of trade betwixt Bengal and Europe, in favour of the former.

The next branch of the Bengal trade is that with the two

gulphs

gulphs of Mocha and Perſia; through which ſhe ſupplies the Turkiſh dominions with her manufactures: and theſe are moſtly paid for in ſpecie: this branch is mightily decayed of late; we ſhall however, allow for it nearly at the rate of former times; ſuppoſing the two gulphs to remit about 22 lack of Sicca rupees, at 2s. 6d. per Sicca rupee, is 275,000 l.— Her immediate trade with Scindy is now trifling. A great part of her returns from Surat and Bombay is made in cotton. She receives from the coaſt of Malabar, black pepper, cardamums, ſandle-wood, &c. We cannot, therefore, ſuppoſe the balance of her trade, with the whole Weſt ſide of the peninſula of India, to exceed 8 lack of rupees, or 100,000l. ſterling.—

She

She employs a number of veſſels to the Eaſt ſide of this peninſula: but the bulk of their cargoes conſiſts of grain, and other gruff commodities; raw ſilk is almoſt the only valuable article: we ſhall allow for this balance about 5 lack of rupees, or 62,500l. Arrakan and Pegu are not worth mentioning.— She ſupplies the coaſt of Malay, the iſland of Sumatra, &c. with opium and a few piece goods; and is paid in tin, camphire, benjamin, &c. with a little gold: this latter article we ſhall reckon at 4 lack of rupees, or 50,000l. — She ſends picce goods to Mannila; and is paid in ſpecie: this we ſhall ſuppoſe to be 37,500l.— The iſlands of Ceylon and Java are included in the Dutch accounts.— Her trade with China

is

is againſt her; as ſhe ſends ſpecie thither.

Theſe are the ſeveral branches of the Bengal commerce: and, to each of theſe, we have aſſigned a balance; which, according to our propoſal, is conſiderably over-rated. We have, indeed, omitted her interior commerce with the countries round her; becauſe that is over-balanced by the tribute, which is now regularly paid by the Engliſh company to their mogul, amounting to 26 lack of rupees, or 325,000l. which tribute, though it is not exported from India, is withdrawn from Bengal.

Having, therefore, ſpecified and explained the ſeveral articles on both ſides of this account, we ſhall ſtate it as below.

Dr. Bengal in annual account of ſpecie Cr.

	£. ſterling		£. ſterling
To the amount of balance of trade with Europe — —	310,000	By amount of annual tribute paid to the Engliſh Eaſt India company in ſpecie, which is withdrawn — — — —	1,071,996
To Do.—— Do. with the two gulphs of Mocha and Perſia -	275,000	By amount of private fortunes remitted by Engliſh individuals — — — — —	700,000
To Do.—— Do. with the Weſt ſide of the peninſula of India	100,000		1,771,996
To Do.—— Do. with the Eaſt ſide of Do. — — — —	62,500		
To Do.—— Do. with the coaſt of Malay, &c. — — —	50,000		
To Do.—— Do. with Mannila -	37,500		
	835,000		
To balance againſt Bengal, being the exceſs of her annual payments, above her receipts —	936,996		
	1,771,966		

By

By this account, it appears, that the yearly income of Bengal falls ſhort of anſwering her annual diſburſements, by the ſum of 936,996l. ſterling: and this deficiency of yearly income muſt, neceſſarily, be made good, by her, out of her only remaining fund, the capital ſtock of the country. But neither is this ſtock inexhauſtible; far from that, it is even poſſible nearly to aſcertain the limits of it; at leaſt of that part of it which goes to make good the above deficiency: for the capital ſtock of Bengal, as of all eaſtern countries, conſiſts of two parts; one of which is hoarded, and hid by the poſſeſſors; the other is that which the neceſſary occaſions of the inhabitants hath thrown into circulation. The firſt of theſe, ſo long as it is hoarded

and hid, forms no part of the public or common ſtock; and is as much out of the reach of government, unleſs by means of violence, as if it was ſtill hid in the moſt diſtant mines; it cannot, therefore, be admitted into the account of finances, farther than as it may be voluntarily produced by the owner, and iſſued into circulation: and to this he can only have two motives; firſt, intereſt, or the view of making gain by it in commerce:—ſecond, neceſſity, to defray the expence of living. As to the firſt of theſe motives, it can but little influence the natives of Bengal to produce their hidden wealth, they being, in a great meaſure, excluded from commerce: on the contrary, this very excluſion, together, with the exaggerated price of neceſſaries, will

will oblige the rich natives to remove themſelves, together with their wealth, to other countries; where they can employ it to ſome advantage; and live at a ſmaller expence.* And ſuch removal will ſerve to diminiſh that other cauſe of circulation, the perſonal expence of the rich.

Therefore, the capital fund, that is to be here reckoned upon, conſiſts of that which may be ſuppoſed to have formed the circulating ſtock of Bengal, at the time

* It hath been advanced, that there is no danger of the natives removing from Bengal, ſo long as the Ganges remains; meaning, that the religious regard of the Gentoo inhabitants for that river, will ever tye them to the country. But, ſetting aſide the deteſtable tyranny of this aſſertion, it is evidently falſe; becauſe Bengal is not the only country inhabited by the profeſſors of the Gentoo religion; and of conſequence Gentoos can live elſewhere than in Bengal.

time when the Engliſh became ſovereigns of it. And, ſeeing, that the neceſſary demands or occaſions of the inhabitants, which is the ſource and cauſe of circulation in all countries, are but few in Bengal, we cannot rekon the whole amount of her circulation to have ever exceeded twice the ſum of her annual revenue; though we ſhall here admit it to have been twice and a half, or ten millions ſterling. So that this ſum, of ten millions, may be ſaid to compoſe that fund, which, with a ſmall addition made to it by the neceſſary expence of the rich inhabitants, hath, hitherto, enabled Bengal to make good that annual deficiency of her yearly ſpecie income: which deficiency appears to be 936,996l. ſterling.

It will then follow, that Bengal hath, for above five years paſt, ſuffered, by the means of her preſent government, an annual diminution of, nearly, one tenth part of her capital ſtock of wealth. And that ſuch a drain, if continued, muſt produce the utter impoveriſhment of that country, cannot be doubted; notwithſtanding the aſſertions of thoſe ſpeculative politicians, who affirm, that it is impoſſible for one country to drain another of its wealth, excepting by means of the ſword; meaning, no doubt, a general pillage: becauſe, ſay they, the very effect of an intercourſe highly diſadvantageous to the one of them, even the ſcarcity of ſpecie, will prove a natural remedy

remedy to the diſeaſe.* But theſe ſpecu-

* Theſe ſame politicians do, with a like degree of truth and reaſon, affirm, that the Engliſh do not at preſent draw from Bengal a ſum equal to that which was formerly paid to the court of Dehli, by that country, while ſubject to the Mogul emperors: and from thence they infer, that, as that larger ſum paid to the mogul did not impoveriſh Bengal, a ſmaller ſum paid to the Engliſh cannot injure her. But, in the firſt place, the premiſe or major is here altogether falſe; the court of Dehli never received from Bengal a tribute, in ſpecie, nearly equal to the ſums which the Engliſh draw at preſent from that country, by means of tribute and private fortunes. In the ſecond place, if the premiſe was even admitted to be true, yet the inference is evidently fallacious and foreign: becauſe the tribute which Bengal tranſmitted to Dehli muſt, ſo long as ſhe continued to form a member of the Mogul empire, be conſidered as an interior expence; which, in the courſe of circulation, reverted to her again: for the revenues of that empire did not ſtagnate in the capital; the prodigious expence of a luxurious court did quickly diſſipate the greater part of them; and the rich manufactures of Bengal, forming a conſiderable part of this luxury, did quickly recal from that court a ſum exceeding

ſpeculators muſt be but little acquainted with the true ſtate of the

ceeding the tribute paid by her. Whereas, the mighty ſums which the Engliſh draw from Bengal, being either employed to ſupport the expences of a war, or to defray the charges of government, in a diſtinct and unconnected part of India; or otherwiſe, being ſent to China to purchaſe cargoes; or immediately tranſmitted to Europe, are finally and irrecoverably loſt to Bengal.

Having thus fairly ſtated this caſe, the fallaciouſneſs of the above inference is ſo very obvious, that our having, at all, adverted to it may appear impertinent. But it muſt be obſerved that, in a ſubject of this nature, where only a few intereſted perſons can pretend to experimental knowledge; and where theſe perſons do avail themſelves of this advantage, to abuſe the underſtanding of others, by ſpecious inferences deduced from forged or foreign facts, the neceſſity of confutation becomes frequent.

The above inference, which hath been frequently applied with great ſucceſs, is a ſpecimen of that neceſſity; and this remark will, it is hoped, once for all, account for the frequency of Notes in this piece.

the caſe before us; otherwiſe, they would have learnt, that there are certain other methods, which are found to anſwer the purpoſe of draining a country, much more compleatly, though, perhaps, not quite ſo ſpeedily as the ſword.

For the ſword, in whatever manner it is employed upon a commercial country, whether in the way of a general pillage or the moſt ſevere military contribution, can never glean ſo cloſe, but that ſome, nay a conſiderable, part of her wealth will eſcape: but the country that hath been ſubjected to pillage, is ever ſpeedily deſerted by her oppreſſors; and is thus left in the full and vigorous poſſeſſion of her arts, manufactures, and commerce: ſo that this ſudden and partial deprivation

privation of her ſpecie, doth only prove a neceſſary cauſe of frugality, and a ſpur to induſtry; by the means of which, this country doth quickly recover herſelf. Whereas, the country that is ſubjected to a tyranny ſuch as we have deſcribed, where the juriſdiction, the police, the finances, and, what is ſtill more, the entire active commerce, are totally engroſſed by foreigners; who have the opportunity, by either one or other of thoſe means, to command every ſign of ſpecie that circulates; and who are annually tranſmitting from her above double the ſum that ſhe receives by commerce, is certainly liable to be moſt completely drained of her ſpecie. But impoveriſhment is only a ſmall part of the damage ſuſtained

by this miſerable country; for that grievous commercial oppreſſion, and theſe deſtructive monopolies, having been continued for a length of time, do at laſt thoroughly ruin the manufactures and commerce, and even quench the ſpirit of induſtry: ſo that if we are to ſuppoſe that this country ſhall, when become incapable of yielding any farther benefit, be deſerted by her oppreſſors; and if we do farther admit, that ſhe ſhall have retained any ſmall part of her ſpecie, by means of ſecreting, yet it is impoſſible that ſhe ſhould ever recover herſelf; becauſe ſhe hath loſt that induſtry, commerce, and the uſual markets, which were the only ſources of her wealth. We may therefore conclude, that this new ſpecies of tyranny, a mercantile one, is the moſt

completely deſtructive that can be deviſed. Military conquerors devour the fruit, but theſe mercantile tyrants root up the tree.

However, as the cleareſt ſpeculative argument is liable to contraverſion, we ſhall reſt no part of the merits of this cauſe upon any thing that may have been here advanced in the way of ſpeculation; ſeeing we have much firmer ground to build upon, even, the inconteſtible evidence of ſtrong fact. For the difficulty, next to an impoſſibility, of calling in ſpecie in that country; the diſcount of 14 per cent. on the company's own bonds or bills; and the great advance of premium paid, by even Europeans of the beſt credit, for the uſe of numerical ſpecie; are proofs, more convincing than mathematical demonſtration, that the circu-

circulating ſtock of Bengal is already ſo far exhauſted, that one or two years more of the preſent drain muſt reduce her to utter impoveriſhment; or, which is the ſame thing in a commercial country, to a total ſtagnation of circulation. Whilſt at the ſame time her commerce, groaning under that grievous oppreſſion which hath been mentioned, is every day approaching to ruin. And thus Bengal, which ever till of late was one of the firſt commercial countries, and, by that, one of the richeſt in the world, is likely to be reduced, through the rapaciouſneſs of her preſent government, to a ſtate of the moſt abject miſery, without either wealth or commerce.

But it is evident, that if the government of Britain ſhall permit this

this company and their ſervants thus to ſacrifice the intereſt of Bengal to their own rapacious views, it doth thereby ſubject the nation to the irretrievable loſs of that immenſe benefit which ſhe derives from this branch of her dominion, through the channels of commerce and revenue. In the preſent ſituation of affairs, a deprivation of this, which is her capital reſource, muſt prove a mortal blow to the intereſts of Britain: it is therefore to be hoped, that government, aroused by the importance and imminence of the danger, will vigorouſly interpoſe its authority to ſave the nation from this heavy misfortune. This is as yet within her power; for though the caſe is nearly deſperate it is not quite paſt cure; there is ſtill one,

though

though but one, remedy; which, if ſpeedily and effectually applied, may not only prevent the ruin, but reſtore the proſperity of Bengal. And to the end that the propriety, as well as the neceſſity of this remedy may more clearly appear, we ſhall here recapitulate, and collect into one point of view, the ſeveral efficient cauſes of thoſe evils which, at preſent, threaten the deſtruction of that country.

The firſt, or fundamental ſource of thoſe evils is, that the abſolute ſovereign government of Bengal hath been delegated, farmed or leaſed to a ſet of men, who holding it for only a limited term of years, conſider it as a temporary object, and do, therefore, endeavour to make the moſt of it for themſelves, without reſpect to the future

future intereſt of the country.

The ſecond, is, that this temporary ſovereign being itſelf a ſubject, and executing the government of Bengal by a ſubſtitution of fellow-ſubjects, over whom it poſſeſſeth no judicial authority, it is thereby incapable, was it even ſo diſpoſed, of reſtraining this ſubſtitute from proſtituting the intereſt of that country to his own particular purpoſes.

The third, is, that the abſolute ſovereign of Bengal doth exerciſe there the function of a merchant: and, in this latter capacity, becomes the grievous oppreſſor of that country's commerce.

The ſource and cauſes of thoſe evils being thus aſcertained, there can be no manner of difficulty in

diſcovering the proper remedy: for common ſenſe informs us, that if the nation of Britain, which is the real and perpetual ſovereign of Bengal, ſhall aſſume the government into her own hands, that firſt, or fundamental evil muſt naturally ceaſe. Becauſe, this ſovereignty being her own property, the national government of Britain cannot conſider or treat it as a temporary object, held in truſt for another; on the contrary, her own intereſt muſt lead her to look forward, and provide for the laſting welfare of the country.

In the ſecond place, the national government of Britain would execute the government of Bengal, by a deputation of its own ſubjects; over whom it poſſeſſeth not only ſupreme legiſlative

giſlative, but abſolute judicial, authority. Of conſequence, this ſovereign could not be deficient in power to eſtabliſh that ſubordination, decorum, and good order, which conſtitutes a regular government; and the want of which creates the preſent anarchical tyranny:—The rules and orders of this ſovereign would not, like thoſe of the company, prove impotent and ineffectual; they would carry the weight and force of laws; as bearing a proper penalty on the infraction.

In the third place, the national government of Britain, holding, itſelf, no concern in commerce, the deputation, by which it would execute the gogernment of Bengal, could have no pretext to interfere in matters of traffic. So that this change

of the political government, muſt immediately ſuppreſs and aboliſh that new and monſtrous ſpecies of deſpotiſm, the mercantile one; a tyranny which, as hath been ſhewn, is the moſt deſtructive to the intereſts of a commercial country that human fancy can poſſibly deviſe. For we muſt again repeat it, that the moſt intolerable of the many enormous grievances which, at preſent, infeſt Bengal, is this, that her abſolute ſovereign acts in the capacity of a merchant; it being evident, that the abſolute ſovereign of any country, commencing merchant in his own dominions, muſt quickly prove the only merchant there; and that in a country where there is only one merchant, and he poſſeſſed of abſolute

lute power, commerce cannot poſſibly exiſt. Yet even this is not the only evil, reſulting from that unnatural combination of two ſuch oppoſite functions, in one and the ſame perſon, for this abſolute merchant having occaſion to diſperſe a number of ſervants over the whole face of the country, for the purpoſe of managing his commerce, each of theſe ſervants derives to himſelf, from the ſovereign capacity of his employer, an authority to domineer and oppreſs the inhabitants of his own diſtrict: and, by this means, the number of petty tyrannies becomes multiplied to an extraordinary degree.

Nor is it poſſible to remedy or prevent the exiſtence of this intolerable grievance, in ſuch a country

country as Bengal, where the natives are ſo exceſſively timid and ſo extremely ſubmiſſive to Europeans of any denomination, otherwiſe than by ſeparating the adminiſtration of thoſe two oppoſite offices, into two different departments; ſo completely and clearly diſtinct from each other, that the adminiſtrators of the political concerns ſhall be effectually debarred from traffic, or from dealing directly or indirectly in matters of trade; ſo as that, their own hands being clean, they may, with propriety, compel others to pay a due reſpect to the laws; whilſt, on the other hand, thoſe who have the charge of the company's commercial concerns, and who themſelves will ever be merchants, ſhall be reſtrained, under a properly ſevere penalty, from interfering

fering, in the moſt diſtant degree, with the juriſdiction; or from otherwiſe exerciſing authority over either the native officers employed in the police, the merchants, artiſans, or any other native ſubjects.

But it is morally impracticable to effect this clear diſtinction, in the ſubſtitute adminiſtration of thoſe two different offices, ſo long as the ſupreme charge of the ſovereignty, and commerce, remains veſted in one and the ſame head: for this is the *origo mali*, the ſource and fountain from whence the evil flows. The corruption is lodged in the head, and no art nor device can prevent that corruption from communicating to the members. Let the company divide their ſubſtitution into twenty different

different degrees or orders, and let them diſtinguiſh each of thoſe degrees by a different epithet, governors, ſupervifors, or what elſe they can deviſe: this difference of title will make no manner of difference in the nature of the thing: theſe ſeveral degrees will reſemble Flaminius's feaſt of twenty diſhes, which were all but hogs meat dreſſed up with different ſauces; they will ſtill form the ſubſtitute government of a ſubject, ſovereign, mercantile company.*

Whereas

* Nor do we advance this neceſſity, of excluding the company's ſervants from the power of juriſdiction, upon the ſtrength of our own ſimple judgment; we have a much better authority for it, even the beſt, that of the Eaſt India company itſelf: for that ſyſtem of government which this company aimed and attempted

Whereas the national government of Britain aſſuming to itſelf

attempted to eſtabliſh in Bengal in 1760, at which time the ſovereignty was equally within their reach as when afterwards ſeized for them, tended to no other end than that which we have here propoſed; namely, to ſeclude their own ſubſtitute adminiſtration from any participation in the juriſdiction of that country. Now on that occaſion, the company's affairs were directed by a ſet of prudent and judicious men, who, by long experience, had acquired an intimate knowledge of the true intereſts of their conſtituents, and who were not harraſſed and diſtracted by the vociferous clamour of a voracious ſet of proprietors, but were permitted to employ their own reaſon and judgment: their choice was therefore free in every reſpect, uninfluenced and unreſtrained; and they, after the moſt mature deliberation, after duly weighing every circumſtance of advantage and diſadvantage on either ſide of the queſtion, declined interfering with the ſovereignty or any of its rights; as being thoroughly convinced, by not only their own reaſon, but by the experience of three preceeding years, that in the hands of their ſubſtitute adminiſtration it would produce the ruin and deſtruction of thoſe countries

ſelf the ſupreme direction of the political government in Bengal, this

countries. They, therefore, did not ſimply reject it, they endeavoured to place it, as far as they poſſibly could, out of the reach of their own ſubſtitute adminiſtration; by reſtoring and augmenting the power and dignity of the native nabob; by reclaiming all the uſurpations of their ſervants; inhibiting them, under the penalty of diſmiſſion, from interfering, in the moſt diſtant degree, with the juriſdiction, or from exerciſing any manner of authority over the natives; and ſtrictly commanding them to pay the utmoſt deference and reſpect to the authority of the nabob, whom they were to conſider as the legal prince of that country, where they reſided in no other character than that of merchants.

This is a literal tranſcript of that ſyſtem which the company, while in their ſober ſenſes, endeavoured to eſtabliſh in Bengal: they diſclaimed every the moſt diſtant ſhare of the ſovereign authority, and delivered it up, intire, to a diſtinct power, which they may be ſaid to have created, at leaſt reſtored, for that very purpoſe. And, ſurely, nothing leſs than the ſtrongeſt conviction of the abſolute neceſſity of this meaſure, could have induced them, to not only diveſt themſelves of the rich revenues

of

this ſtrict and clear ſeparation of office would enſue of courſe. For ſeeing

of thoſe countries; but alſo to create a power which, as it held an intereſt diſtinct from their own, might poſſibly prove dangerous to their influence there. But this meaſure is not leſs neceſſary, at preſent, than it was at that time; on the contrary, that neceſſity is now become infinitely more urgent; becauſe Bengal hath, ever ſince then, been ſubjected to the unbounded tyranny, and intolerable oppreſſion of thoſe voracious harpies, whom the company attempted to bridle and reſtrain by this very ſyſtem; and of conſequence that country hath approached nearer, by the ſpace of nine years, to that point of ruin, which the company did at that time apprehend, and endeavour to prevent.

This buſineſs cannot, therefore, admit of longer trifling with ſuperviſing and other ſuch expedients, calculated only to amuſe and deceive. There is no poſſibility of preventing the ſpeedy and abſolute ruin of thoſe countries, by any other method, than that which the company itſelf hath pointed out; namely, to wreſt the juriſdiction out of the hands of merchants, and to veſt it in a diſtinct power; which ſhall poſſeſs, not only ability, but inclination

ſeeing, that the Britiſh ſhare of commerce, in that country, would ſtill remain to the Eaſt India company, and their ſervants would continue to be indulged with all thoſe juſt privileges which they enjoyed there under a regular government, theſe ſervants would, through jealouſy of privilege, prove a ſufficient check on the political adminiſtration, ſhould it ever diſcover a diſpoſition to tranſgreſs the limits of its own department, by meddling in commerce. Whilſt, on

clination (from intereſt) to ſuppreſs that deſtructive commercial oppreſſion ; and to eſtabliſh a juſt and regular police.—Common ſenſe points out that power to be the national government of Great Britain ; becauſe it, alone, is capable of effecting all the good purpoſes of the company's ſyſtem in 1760 ; whilſt at the ſame time, it muſt be totally exempted from all the defects.

on the other hand, the political government would exert its authority to reſtrain the ſervants of the company from abuſing their privileges, to the oppreſſion of the natives.

And, in this manner, that clear diſtinction of thoſe two different departments would not only be immediately effected, but would, alſo, be eſtabliſhed on a firm and permanent baſis: becauſe the limits of each, having been at firſt clearly aſcertained, would, afterwards, be ſtrongly guarded, by a mutual jealouſy, founded upon a diſtinction of perſonal intereſt: and the ſalutary effects of this diſtinction, would be quickly felt by the natives; who, being emancipated from their preſent commercial ſlavery would quickly reſtore manufac-

ture

ture and trade to its priſtine vigour: ſo that if there was no other motive to this aſſumption than the reformation of that commercial abuſe, it, alone, is an argument ſufficiently powerful.

But theſe numberleſs petty tyrannies, that, at preſent, exiſt in every corner of Bengal, would be thoroughly ſuppreſſed by the very nature of this change of the political government; nor could they poſſibly revive again, in any ſhape, under the national government; ſeeing, that it would not, like the company, have occaſion to diſperſe a number of ſervants over the face of the country: for the ſupreme political adminiſtration would be conducted by one chamber, of a very few members, eſtabliſhed at Calcutta. The revenue would be the

the only branch requiring a deputation : and for this, two, or at moſt three, inferior chambers would ſuffice : of which, one might be fixed at either Chittogung, or Dacca, for the Eaſt; another at Patnah, for the North ; and a third, if abſolutely neceſſary, at Muxadavad, or ſomewhere elſe in the midland country. For it muſt be ever remembered, that the fewer European deputies, the leſs there will be of oppreſſion ; and, for this reaſon, the interior juriſdiction will be ſafer in the hands of the natives ; with the right of appeal, againſt oppreſſion, to the neighbouring chamber of revenue, or to the courts at Calcutta.

But, notwithſtanding the evident rationality of that which is here advanced, I am well aware that

that it will be loudly contradicted and condemned, becauſe it is oppoſite to the implicitly received notions of the dreadful power and conſequently arbitrary ſentiments of a national governor of Bengal; who, becauſe he would act by an authority ſo far ſuperior to that of the company, muſt, it is ſuppoſed, be, in proportion, more deſpotic than a company's governor: a national governor would, it is ſaid, be above all controul; and would, therefore, tyrannize and oppreſs the ſervants of the company as well as the native ſubjects. Now that ſuch an opinion ſhould be general, is no more to be wondered at, than that it ſhould be falſe, if we conſider that, in the firſt place, almoſt all thoſe who have had

had an opportunity of informing themſelves, on the ſpot, of the ſtate of affairs in Bengal are ſuch as have been ſervants of the India company, and ſtill retain an intereſt in this company, either in their own perſons, or by their relations and connections: and that, in the ſecond place, all thoſe who have not been upon the ſpot themſelves, will form their notions of theſe matters, by the repreſentations of the firſt; whoſe judgment and opinion, even admitting them to be well diſpoſed, is liable to be ſwayed by intereſt. The impoſition is, at the ſame time, greatly facilitated, by the ſurprizing indifference of the public to theſe affairs; aud by the preſent unhappy prejudice againſt the national government itſelf.

But, if reaſon and common ſenſe have not entirely loſt their influence, they muſt quickly diſcover the groſs abſurdity of that opinion, which ſuppoſes that, becauſe the power of the national government of Britain is in itſelf more abſolute than that of her Eaſt India company, the power of a governor of Bengal acting under the authority of this government, muſt, for this reaſon, be more unlimited than that of him who acts in the ſame capacity under the company. For what is this but inferring, that in proportion as the power of a principal over his deputy is greater, ſo will his authority over this deputy be leſs? or, that the greater the ability of a conſtituent to puniſh the infidelity of his agent, the more apt will this

this agent be to abuſe his truſt? and to *vice verſa*. Can ſuch an inference be admitted? Let us refer to a more particular view of the actual ſtate of the caſe.

The Eaſt India company adminiſters the government of Bengal by a ſubſtitution of *fellow-ſubjects*, over whom it poſſeſſes no judicial authority. In conſequence of which, this ſubſtitute being ſenſible that his conſtituents can call him to no account for his actions, except in the character of Plaintiffs, before an ordinary court of juſtice, where he knows it is impoſſible for them to convict him through want of evidence, he acts under no manner of reſtraint from the fear of puniſhment. Here the impotence of the ſovereign is the very circumſtance

that renders the power of the ſubſtitute abſolute and unlimited.

The national government of Britain would execute the government of Bengal, by a ſubſtitution of *its own ſubjects*; over whom it poſſeſſeth not only ſupreme legiſlative, but abſolute judicial authority, by which it can itſelf try the offences of this ſubſtitute in a ſummary way, upon ſuch evidence as the nature of the caſe will admit: and can alſo puniſh him in a degree adequate to his offence. But it muſt be obſerved, that there could never be that want of proper evidence againſt a national governor, as there is againſt a company's: becauſe the ſervants of the company, who are the only perſons capable of giving

giving ſuch evidence, are, at preſent, either accomplices or parties in the offence; whereas the intereſt of theſe very ſervants would lead them, not only to witneſs, but even to inform againſt a national governor, in the caſe of his acting in ſuch manner as to merit a proſecution.

The company's ſubſtitution becomes abſolute, deſpotic, and unlimited, in the immediate execution of its office; becauſe there is no check upon the ſpot, no intermediate power betwixt it and the native ſubjects, who are merely paſſive, as being deprived of all manner of influence or capacity of reſiſting.

Whereas, the national ſubſtitution would be balanced in the execution of its office, by a very

ry conſiderable poiſe, even that of the Eaſt India company; which, as retaining the Britiſh ſhare of commerce in that country, would ſtill preſerve a very great influence there, and would, therefore, ſtand up as an intermediate power betwixt the government and the natives. For, ſeeing, that the oppreſſion of the native ſubjects, or any other mal-adminiſtration of government, muſt neceſſarily affect the commercial intereſt of the company; a regard to that intereſt would, neceſſarily induce this company to employ their whole credit, which will ever be very great with this nation, to bring the governor to juſtice. And, as hath been obſerved, the company's ſervants, having been eye witneſſes of his conduct, muſt

muſt be very capable of giving proper information or evidence againſt him.

The king's courts of juſtice would likewiſe, through the ſelf-ſame reaſons that render them ſubſervient to the company's governors, prove a very powerful check on the meaſures of a national governor. For the members of the mayor's court, being, in general, ſervants of the company, hold ſuch dependence on the preſent governor, that he can ever influence a majority of them: but theſe ſame members would hold an intereſt oppoſite to that of a national governor, and would, therefore, exert the whole authority of that court, which is very great, in protection of individuals. The general ſeſſions would,

would, through the ſame cauſe, be independent of this governor; and ſtill more ſo, if he was not to preſide as judge.

With what degree of reaſon can it then be alledged, that a national governor of Bengal, whoſe authority would be thus limited and balanced on the ſpot, by the exiſtence of theſe ſeveral checks, and who is likewiſe ſubjected to ſuch a ſevere and minute retroſpection, in future, would be more abſolute and deſpotic than a company's governor, who ſuffers no manner of controul, in the immediate execution of his office, from either theſe or any other ſort of check, and who is not liable, in the ſequel, to be called to any account for his actions.

We are, in the laſt place, to view

view this company in her warlike capacity; as the ſovereign protector and defender of not only Bengal, but of ſundry other extenſive territorial dominions.* And here we are encountered with this moſt unaccountable abſurdity, that a few merchants, who, as being themſelves ſubjects, are totally dependent for their own protection, and even for their exiſtence as a body, ſhould

* The company poſſeſſeth three other capital ſettlements beſides Bengal; viz. Madraſs, Bombay, and Bencoolen: at each of which ſhe maintains a conſiderable European force. And the governor of each of theſe ſettlements hath the diſcretional power of making war and peace. Bencoolen hath no great opportunity of warring with its neighbours; but Madraſs hath been ſo very alert in the military ſtile, that ever ſince the company commenced warlike, in 1745, it hath ſcarce ever been one year at peace.

ſhould be veſted with, not the ſubordinate office, but the ſupreme and independent ſovereign charge of governing, maintaining, and defending theſe ſeveral dominions; two of which are, either of them, equal in importance to moſt ſtates in Europe. Nor is it poſſible to aſſign any one rational cauſe why the government of Britain, whoſe buſineſs it is to direct the defence of this, equally as of any other, part of the Britiſh dominions, ſhould have withdrawn itſelf from the charge, and devolved it upon the company. The public or common good is the ſtanding rule and guide of every government, in all tranſactions of this high nature; but, in which ever light we view this delegation, we cannot diſcover that

that it tends, in any one inſtance, either to the benefit and emoiument, or to the eaſe and convenience of this nation.

For, on the ſcore of emolument, it appears, that the conſideration paid by the company, to the nation, as ſupreme ſovereign, doth not amount to one third part of the ſurplus revenue which this company draws from only one ſingle branch of thoſe dominions, Bengal: therefore, this delegation deprives the nation of two thirds of the Bengal revenue, and of the whole revenue of the other dominions; all of which muſt, but for this delegation, come entire into the public treaſury. And at the ſame time, this company, inſtead of reſerving theſe mighty ſums as a ſtore to anſwer the expence of

any extraordinary exigence, ſquanders away one part on mock wars, and the remainder ſhe divides and deals away as clear gain: ſo that, in the caſe of any future diſtreſs, this company muſt fall a dead load on the ſhoulders of the nation.

Nor can the delegation of this charge be ſaid to tend to either the eaſe or convenience of the nation, unleſs it ſhall be made appear that this company is poſſeſſed of any certain powers or means of defence which are proper to herſelf and do not appertain to the nation, ſo as that the nation ſhall be thereby ſpared from charge, and expence of force? or, otherwiſe, that the company is, in point of talents, ſkill, and conduct, better qualified to direct the defence of thoſe dominions

minions than the national government is.

With regard to the means of defence, they conſiſt of two parts, the military force that ſerves to protect; and the funds that go to defray the charge of defence: and neither the one nor the other of thoſe parts are in any ſhape proper to the company. For the charge of defence is defrayed out of the revenues of the dominions; and theſe revenues are the property of the real ſovereign, which is the nation of Britain. The military force that ſerves to protect, is compoſed of two parts; Europeans; and ſepoys, or native ſoldiers. The European force is levied, by the company, no where elſe than in Britain; and is, therefore, proper to the nation: and as to the ſepoys, whether

whether we conſider them as mercenaries or as native ſubjects of the conquered dominion, they cannot be termed a force proper to the company; for if they are mercenaries, they are the ſervants of the Britiſh nation, as proprietor of the revenues that go to them; if they are native ſubjects of the dependent dominion, they are ſtill ſervants of the ſame nation, as paramount ſovereign of thoſe dominions; and that they do actually ſerve the company, is only in conſequence of her acting in the character of ſovereign, by the delegated power of the nation.—It is, therefore, evident that, neither the military force that ſerves to maintain and defend thoſe dominions, nor the funds that defray the charge of defence, are, in any ſhape, proper

proper to the company ; but that they, both of them, appertain, wholly and ſolely, to the nation of Britain : and, of conſequence, the delegation of this charge cannot poſſibly tend to the eaſe or convenience of the nation in this reſpect.

But poſſibly the ſuperior talents, ſkill, and conduct of the company may employ theſe means of defence, that are thus furniſhed by the nation, to a better purpoſe than the national government could ; and may, in that reſpect, ſave the nation from charge and expence of force. But that this is not the caſe, will appear from the following review of the matter.

As to the talents or ſkill of the executive government of the company, which we muſt term the ſupreme head of this delega-

tion

tion, it is unneceſſary, on this head, to animadvert upon it, ſeeing, that, by reaſon of the diſtance and alſo becauſe its orders are generally ſlighted, it beareth but a ſmall ſhare in the execution of this charge.—We ſhall only obſerve, that this executive government is compoſed of men whom the nation hath not thought proper to entruſt with any the moſt inferior ſhare in the execution of her own goverment, and whom, for that reaſon, we muſt ſuppoſe to be but little acquainted with the principles of any government: and we may alſo add, that the perſons are liable to be annually changed.

The defence of thoſe dominions is actually directed by a ſubſtitution of three or four men, whom

whom the nature of their education hath excluded from the knowledge of any one human principle, beſides commerce; and whoſe natural talents, we may with great candour affirm, will never ſupply the want of experience. For if we may judge from the appointments made by the direction of the company, more particularly ſince the time they commenced ſovereigns, we muſt conclude that they have eſtabliſhed it as a rule, to employ in their governments only men of the meaneſt parts. What their motive for this particularity of choice may be, we ſhall not take upon us to determine: poſſibly, the conſciouſneſs of their own total deficiency of that innate and intrinſic dignity and ſuperiority, which, of itſelf, com-

mands and enforces the deference of ſubordinates, may have taught them that talents in their deputy is a qualification dangerous to their own temporary importance: or, probably, they may have experienced that, the leſs the merit, the greater will be the gratitude of the deputy. But, whatever may be the cauſe, the effect is evident; as theſe mercantile ſovereigns have, of late years, made choice of ſuch ſubſtitutes, as having no one quality to recommend them to ſuch a charge, may, with great propriety, be ſtiled the "earthly creatures*" of theſe earth-born creators.—Now, it naturally follows, that a ſubſtitution of this ſtamp muſt, neceſſarily, employ in the departments

* A term actually made uſe of.

apartments under it, only ſuch as can take no advantage of its own defects : and in this ratio the gradation proceeds.

Such are the talents and abilities of thoſe men who, at preſent, execute the ſupreme charge of maintaining and defending the Britiſh dominions in India ; and as to the conduct of this able adminiſtration, we ſhall, by way of ſpecimen, exhibit a recent inſtance.

Some few years ago one of thoſe creatures was diſpatched to India, on the common errand of making his fortune : and being ſenſible that, as the duration of his creator's power was uncertain, there was no time to be loſt, he, immediately after entering upon his office, takes ſuch meaſures as cannot fail of pro-

ducing a war with one of the neighbouring princes. By theſe means he quickly accompliſhes his buſineſs; returns to Europe with a large fortune; and leaves the war, as a rich inheritance, to his ſucceſſor.—The conduct of this war is conſigned to a general, who if he even poſſeſſed abilities equal to the charge, is effectually reſtrained by two field deputies, civilians; who are veſted with abſolute power to direct his operations; and who are principally concerned, in point of intereſt, to prevent the general's taking any ſtep that may diſable the enemy from continuing the war. Under ſuch direction this war, which (to ſay the beſt of it) was contracted without a neceſſary cauſe, againſt an Indian prince, who might have been totally

totally cruſhed, in the firſt campaign, by one fourth part of the force employed againſt him, hath been protracted for ſeveral years; at the expence of millions of money, and thouſands of lives: and, during this time, theſe once rich countries, which may be termed the dominions of Britain, have been pillaged, ruined, and depopulated, by a handful of ragamuffins: and that army which, at the beginning of the war, was, if properly conducted, ſufficient to over-run all India, hath been, by the moſt ſcandalous manœuvres, waſted and conſumed: whilſt diſcipline hath fallen into ſuch diſrepute, that even the European officers have betrayed their charge, and deſerted to the enemy. And, at the laſt, when, notwithſtanding all

all their endeavours, the enemy was almoſt exhauſted and reduced to deſpair, theſe honourable agents clapt up a peace, upon ſuch terms as nothing under the utmoſt extremity could excuſe. In conſequence of which puſillanimous conduct, that powerful bulwark, *opinion and reputation*, which might have long ſerved, in thoſe countries, inſtead of numerous armies, is now forfeited, and ſucceeded by contempt; which will prove a fruitful ſource of future wars.

From this recent inſtance of the military direction of thoſe governors, Britain may be enabled to judge, whether the means that are furniſhed by her for the defence of thoſe dominions, are employed to better purpoſe than they would be by her own

government

government. And it may not be amiſs, at the ſame time, to advert to the character ſhe bears, and the part that ſhe acts in this buſineſs; which is, indeed, moſt ſhamefully prepoſterous. A war is commenced in a diſtant part of her dominions; without her knowledge and conſent; by a few men who, though they be her own native ſubjects, are, by the abſurd tenor of their office, not reſponſible to her government for their conduct. And, notwithſtanding that ſhe holds no voice, in either directing the operations or in determining the duration of this war, yet is ſhe compelled to furniſh whatever force may be required to ſupport it, under no leſs a penalty than the forfeiture of thoſe dominions, together with their commerce.

So

So that ſhe paſſively ſluices out her native blood; ſquanders away that treaſure, which, being the property of her foreign ſubjects, is in fact her own treaſure; expoſes thoſe ſubjects to the many miſeries of war; proſtitutes and diſgraces her own character and reputation; and conciliates the enmity of the neighbouring ſtates: and all this for the noble purpoſe of furniſhing to a few individuals, who, for the moſt part, are of the meaneſt birth and education, an opportunity to amaſs fortunes; which, though they conſiſt of only a ſmall part of that wealth which paſſes through their hands on thoſe occaſions, are yet enormous; and which, when imported to Britain, becomes, in ſuch hands, the ſource of many evils. But, ſo long as this ſovereignty remains

remains veſted in the company, Britain muſt lay her account that affairs will be conducted on a ſimilar plan: for it would be very extraordinary, indeed, if either one or other of thoſe independent governors ſhould not be in the humour to make his own fortune and that of his ſeconds, by a method ſo very eaſy and ſafe; eaſy, becauſe it depends altogether on his own will; and ſafe, becauſe he needs fear no puniſhment.

Such are the terms upon which the nation ſtands, with reſpect to this ſovereign company, during the while that ſhe herſelf is at peace. But in the caſe of a rupture with her European neighbours, the burthen and expence of protecting thoſe ſovereigns is moſt grievouſly en-

hanced. For the defence and ſecurity of thoſe dominions, againſt the attack of an European enemy, muſt ever depend upon a ſuperiority at ſea: and, as the company doth not maintain a ſingle ſhip of the line, the nation is neceſſitated to ſupply the whole naval force required to oppoſe the efforts of ſuch enemy in this quarter.—— Thus Britain was obliged, during the late war with France, to maintain in India ſeventeen capital ſhips, beſides frigates; being nearly one ſixth part of her whole naval force. With reſpect to land force, ſhe was, over and above the annual drain of men made by the company, obliged to ſend thither four regiments of her own ſtanding troops. And theſe mighty armaments, thus furniſhed and paid by the nation,

are ſubjected to the order and direction of thoſe great ſtateſmen, the East India company's ſubſtitutes; to be applied, by them, to what purpoſes, or in what manner they may think proper: and whatever acquiſitions or conqueſts may be made by thoſe armaments, become the property, not of the nation, but of the company.

Hitherto we have conſidered this delegation, ſo far as it reſpects national emolument, and convenience: it remains to examine it upon a point of ſtill higher moment, even the actual ſtate of defence; on which depends the poſſeſſion, or ultimate ſecurity of the object delegated. And to the end that we may come at a right underſtanding of this ſubject, we ſhall, after having condeſcended

upon the nature and quality of that military force which ſerves to maintain and defend thoſe dominions, proceed to aſcertain what degree of that force may be requiſite to this purpoſe of defence; and, in the laſt place, we ſhall enquire into the capacity of the company to furniſh the full proportion of this force.

It becomes neceſſary to aſcertain the nature and quality of that force which ſerves to maintain this dominion, becauſe the company doth actually employ, in their military ſervice, two ſpecies of troops; namely, Europeans, and ſepoys: both of which might, but for ſuch diſtinction, be repreſented as equally proper and uſeful to this purpoſe of defence. Whereas, in fact, the ſepoy force is not to be reckoned upon, except

except in a ſubordinate or ſuccedaneous degree: ſeeing, that theſe troops muſt, of neceſſity, be conſidered in one of theſe two characters, either as abſolute mercenaries, or as native ſubjects of the conquered dominions; and cannot, in either of theſe characters, be relied on, as principals, in point of fidelity: for abſolute mercenaries, having no real bond of attachment to their employers, are ever ready to take that part which promiſes the greateſt immediate advantage; and the native ſubjects of a conquered dominion are led by intereſt and the love of their country to rather ſuppreſs than maintain the authority of their conquerors. Moreover, theſe ſepoys being Indians, their firmneſs and ſteadineſs in the field, are, for the general

general reaſons aſſigned in page 40 of the firſt part, to be diſtruſted. But the European force being compoſed of natives of the ſovereign dominion, their fidelity to the ruling ſovereign is inſured by the bond of intereſt; and, as being Europeans, their firmneſs and courage can be depended on.

Such being the different quality and diſpoſition of theſe two ſpecies of troops, we muſt perceive that the maintenance and defence of this dominion reſts, not ſimply in a principal, but rather, in a ſole degree, upon the European force; becauſe whatever virtue or utility may exiſt in the native troops is not inherent in themſelves, it is derived, or, to ſpeak more properly, it is reflected, from the European force; which

which is the efficient cauſe that theſe natives are uſeful, who are, otherwiſe, to be dreaded as dangerous. Therefore, in condeſcending upon the nature and quality of that force which ſerves to maintain and defend this dominion, we are to reckon upon the European force alone: and that, not only for the reaſons that have been juſt mentioned, but, alſo, becauſe this force is, through ſeveral cauſes, extremely difficult to be acquired; whereas, the native force is ever eaſily attainable, to any extent, by that power which may happen to poſſeſs the revenue that goes to pay them.

As to the degree of European force neceſſary to the ordinary defence of Bengal, we have, in the firſt part, obſerved, that it is reckoned

reckoned to be, at the loweſt, three thouſand men: which is, in a proportion to the native force of about one to ten: and we have alſo obſerved, that the annual recruit, for this ordinary ſtanding force, may be about eight hundred men. But as the company is, now, poſſeſſed of ſundry other dominions and ſettlements, which ſhe maintains by military power, the defence of the whole becomes but one common object; not only for that the company is obliged, in the annual diſtribution of her ſupplies, to hold reſpect to the wants of each; but, likewiſe, becauſe, in the caſe of any one of thoſe poſſeſſions being engaged in war, the others are neceſſitated to ſupport it with a part of their force, which is thus ſubjected to diminution. So that, the

the defence of the whole being in this manner connected and mingled, we cannot, in aſcertaining the degree of force required annually by the company, diſtinguiſh or ſeparate the defence of any one particular part; we muſt reckon upon the defence of her whole poſſeſſions; including not only Bengal, but Madraſs, Bombay, Bencoolen; and their ſubordinates; together with the iſland of St. Helena.—The ordinary ſtanding force required to properly maintain and defend theſe ſeveral poſſeſſions, cannot, at leaſt it ought not, on the company's preſent extenſive plan, to conſiſt of leſs than eight or nine thouſand Europeans: and to keep up this force, to its full compliment, will demand, in common years, a recruit of two thouſand: but caſu-

alties may encreaſe it to three thouſand men.

And now we are to enquire into the capacity or ability of the company to furniſh this neceſſary force.— The company is indulged, by government, with a permiſſion to levy ſoldiers in the Britiſh dominions: and there alone it is that ſhe raiſes her recruits; having experienced that foreign Europeans are not to be depended on. The ordinary method of enliſting volunteers falls greatly ſhort of anſwering her neceſſary demand: ſhe, therefore, has recourſe to that unjuſtifiable practice of kidnapping, decoying, and locking up; a ſpecies of recruiting which government does not allow tc itſelf, in even the greateſt neceſſity; and which is ſo repugnant to the ſpirit of our laws

laws, that the meaneſt officer of juſtice hath a right to interpoſe his authority againſt it. In conſequence of which, we muſt perceive that the ways and means which the company employs to recruit her force are extremely precarious and uncertain. How far it doth really prove deficient will appear, from a review of the ſtate of her military eſtabliſhment in India, ſince the time ſhe became that mighty warlike power.

We have mentioned that, during the late war with France, the nation maintained four regiments in India. Upon the peace theſe troops were reduced in that country; and were, thereby, neceſſitated to enliſt into the ſervice of the company: which was a very ſeaſonable addition to their

force, as happening about the time when they became ſovereigns of Bengal. But the diſbanding ſo many thouſand ſoldiers in Britain, upon the concluſion of the late war, did alſo afford to the company an eaſy opportunity, of not only augmenting for the preſent, but likewiſe of recruiting for ſome years afterwards. We cannot, therefore, expect that, ſo long as theſe opportunities laſted, the company would find any difficulty in procuring ſoldiers. But now that theſe opportunities have ceaſed, the caſe is mightily altered. The force they had acquired during theſe years of plenty, hath been, by their late bad management, greatly reduced; ſo that the ſupply demanded, for the year 1769, by their ſervants in India, who, it is to be preſumed,

would

would, for their own credit, be careful not to exaggerate, was, at the loweſt, 3000 rank and file: and though it is moſt probable that even this was highly inſufficient, yet the company did not ſend out half that number. This preſent ſeaſon hath proved equally deficient in point of real ſoldiers*: ſo that their European ſtanding force is annually diminiſhing.

Of this the company are not inſenſible

* The company do not ſcruple to give out, that they have ſent this ſeaſon 3000 able-bodied men to India: but in this number they muſt certainly include the ſailors of their ſhips: for as to ſoldiers, out of twenty two ſhips that carry troops, only two have embarked the length of 100; and, for the remainder, they have ordered proviſion to be made for only 80 men in each ſhip; though, it is moſt probable, that, upon an average, they will not carry 60; and, in this proviſion, officers and cadets are included.

inſenſible; but, inſtead of diſcloſing their ſituation, they have taken the following method, to ſupply the want of a regular European force; or rather to deceive themſelves, and this nation. The great fortunes imported of late from India having raiſed an eager ſpirit of expectation, ſuch numbers of young gentlemen make application to be received into the company's ſervice, in the character of officers, that for ſome years paſt they have found it extremely eaſy to procure as many cadets as they pleaſe to accept; and accordingly, this preſent ſeaſon, they have embarked, excluſive of 79 commiſſioned officers, ſome hundreds of theſe young candidates. This ſcheme is to ſerve a double purpoſe: it is propoſed, in the firſt place, to augment the Sepoy force; and

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to officer it out of theſe cadets with Europeans; who are to alter the nature of theſe troops, and make them anſwer the end of a diſtinct European corps: and as there will ſtill remain a large number of cadets unprovided for, theſe are to turn into the ranks, and do the ſervice of common recruits. A device of no ſmall reach, as it is, no doubt, pretended that this corps of gentlemen will render much better ſervice than an equal number of common men: but in this the company will experience a miſtake; for theſe cadets, finding themſelves deceived, will, in the ſpace of two or three years, become heartily tired of vain expectation, of ſevere duty, and of hard fare afforded by low pay: they will, therefore, in order to better their condition, offer their

their ſervice to the neighbouring native princes; who will readily accept them. In conſequence of which, we may, in four or five years hence, provided we can ſuppoſe the company ſhall retain their ſovereignty ſo long, expect to find Soujah Dowlah, or ſome other of their neighbours, meeting them in the field, with an army as well diſciplined and officered, and a train of artillery equally well formed and conducted, as their own.

The other part of this device will appear ſtill more dangerous, upon adverting to the few following facts.—Whoever is acquainted with the preſent ſtate of diſcipline to which the company's ſepoy force hath arrived, will allow that, if we were to ſuppoſe a fair trial of ſkill in the field, the proportion

tion of even two or, at moſt, three ſepoys to one European might be rather too great: nevertheleſs, we have, in our calculation, admitted 3000 Europeans to above 30,000 ſepoys, being about one to ten, as a ſufficient proportion: and the reaſon is, becauſe we allow largely for the two circumſtances— of *addreſs*, and *opinion*. By *addreſs* we mean a proper degree of attention and ſkill in thoſe who, holding the command and direction of the whole force, have it in their power to diſpoſe it in ſuch manner, as that this body of 3000 Europeans ſhall, by their local ſituation, ever appear, in the eye of thoſe Indians, as an over-match for any collected body of themſelves. And, by *opinion*, we would ſignify, not only the real and rational awe

which the exiſtence of ſuch an European corps muſt, neceſſarily, impreſs; but likewiſe that ideal one ariſing from the high notion theſe Indians entertain of the ſuperior ability of Europeans. But effects cannot ſubſiſt without their cauſe; and when the cauſe is removed the effect muſt ceaſe: it therefore follows, that this opinion or awe, being an effect cauſed by and depending upon the exiſtence of ſuch a body of European troops as ſhall ſuffice to afford a rational ground for it, cannot ſubſiſt longer than while that ſufficient body of European troops is kept up: and that ſo ſoon as the European force ſhall be diminiſhed below this ſufficing proportion, then will awe or opinion ceaſe, and give place to that ſpirit of competition, which muſt be

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ever inherent, in a certain degree, in the ſepoy force, as being natives of the conquered dominion. We muſt alſo perceive, that the other advantage, of controul by local ſituation, cannot be preſerved otherwiſe than by retaining this ſufficient European force in one diſtinct corps; becauſe, if it ſhall be mixed and blended in one and the ſame corps with the ſepoys, then muſt this advantage ceaſe; it being plain that there can then be no diſtinction of ſituation.

Now the company's ſyſtem is diametrically oppoſite to theſe ſelf-evident axioms: for they have already ſuffered the European force to dwindle above one third below that proper ſtandard; which hath, at the loweſt, been fixed for Bengal at 3000 men; and every year it will upon their

plan, continue to diminiſh. And, in the room of this deficience, they ſubſtitute a few officers, whom they diſperſe in the ſepoy battalions. The natural conſequence of which muſt be, that awe or opinion will ceaſe; becauſe the number of officers, in any one ſepoy battalion, is greatly too ſmall to afford a rational ground for ſuch awe, being in proportion of nearly one to thirty; an odds ſo very great, that the bare contemplation of it, cannot fail of awaking that ſpirit of competition, in men who are far from being dead to ambition.

But, this ſpirit being once rouſed, reaſon will not permit us to ſuppoſe that this ſmall number of officers will ſuffice to quell it: for as to their authority, as officers, that will, on ſuch occaſion

occaſion, be annihilated; and, being mixed and blended with the ſepoy force, the advantage that might have been derived from its ſituation, had even that ſmall number of officers been retained in a diſtinct corps, is loſt: they muſt therefore ſtand as 30 ſingle men, oppoſed, or rather ſurrounded by 700; and may thus be maſſacred or diſarmed with eaſe: whilſt the diſtinct European corps, if any ſuch thing then exiſts, being reduced beneath all rational proportion, dares not interpoſe, but muſt ſhift for itſelf. But this experiment, of diminiſhing the European and augmenting the ſepoy force, becomes ſtill more dangerous, as happening at a ſeaſon when that awe or opinion was otherwiſe weakened, by

by the puſillanimous conduct of the war with Hyder Alli.

Nor can we omit mentioning one other evil, ariſing from this ſcheme of filling up the commiſſioned offices in the ſepoy battalions with Europeans; which is, that it muſt preclude the natives from riſing to any the loweſt poſt of honour, truſt, or profit. An innovation which, as it affords a very rational ground of diſcontent to thoſe men who are not inſenſible to emulation, muſt naturally rouſe in them that dangerous ſpirit of competition: the effects of which, will, moſt certainly, be felt, if not immediately, in the day of danger and of actual ſervice; when theſe troops will ſhew themſelves, not barely mercenaries and conquered ſubjects; but merce-

mercenaries and conquered ſubjects, diſcontented and incenſed, by the inſolence and unjuſt treatment of their employers.

But the company's motive, to this dangerous innovation, is of a nature extremely alarming: for it was not ignorance of the conſequences, that led them into this meaſure, ſeeing, that, not only reaſon, but recent experience in more than one inſtance during that war with Hyder Alli, muſt have fully ſatisfied and convinced them, that the fidelity of the ſepoy force was not, in any emergency, to be depended on; but it was that fatal and ruinous diſtinction, made by individuals, betwixt their own perſonal intereſt, and that of the public; that baſe and wickedly jealous ambition, which

which tempts little minds to ſacrifice the laſting proſperity of the common-weal to their own momentary power and importance. A jealous diſtinction which, on two different occaſions, precipitated the affairs of the French nation and company in India, from a ſtate of the higheſt exaltation to ruin and deſtruction.

For, in the former war betwixt the French and Engliſh in India, it was the jealous ambition of Dupleix, the company's governor, that prevented La Bourdonnais, the king's officer, from proſecuting his enterprize againſt the remaining Engliſh ſettlements; which, after the capture of Madraſs, lay entirely at his mercy. And it was the ſame jealouſy of importance that,

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in the late war, induced the ſervants of the French company, to miſlead Lally, by falſe repreſentations, of the enemies great ſtrength, and of their own inability to ſupply him with money and neceſſaries, and thereby to prevent him from advancing, immediately after the capture of fort St. David's, againſt Madraſs: in which caſe, the fortifications of that place being ſo far from complete, that even the gateways in the curtains were open; and the garriſon altogether inſufficient, ſtruck with a panic, and totally unprovided of neceſſaries, it muſt have fallen into his hands, without the trouble of opening trenches, or any other operation of a formal ſiege: after which, Calcutta would have fallen an eaſy prey. Whereas, their ſend-

ing him upon that tedious and unneceſſary expedition of collecting money in the kingdom of Tanjore, where, indeed, he, in his turn, ſacrificed his duty to his intereſt, afforded eight months reſpite to their antagoniſts; during which, they had opportunity, not only to complete the fortifications of Madraſs, but to augment the garriſon to above double the original number, and otherwiſe to provide every thing neceſſary for ſuſtaining a ſiege. And, though reaſon forbids us to ſuppoſe, that the company's ſervants did either intend, or foreſee, that fatal reverſe of fortune, which afterwards took place; yet is it certain that they did intentionally lay theſe rubs in the way of Lally, for the purpoſe of preventing the annihilation

tion of their own importance, which they foreſaw would enſue from a full accompliſhment of his extenſive views; when he would have become totally independent of them: and as the force of the Engliſh was the ſole obſtacle, that ſtood in the way of this full completion, and conſequent independence, they were very deſirous to preſerve that force, in a degree ſubordinate to their own, for at that time they had a vaſt ſuperiority, as a check upon the aſpiring ſpirit of the king's officer. And it is equally certain and demonſtrable that theſe very rubs proved the cauſe that they who, had they improved their advantage on that occaſion, might have not only expelled the Engliſh but greatly extended their dominion, were

themſelves expelled from India.

Theſe are fatal examples of the ruinous conſequences ariſing from that jealous diſtinction, which is natural to a mercantile company, when admitted to even a participation in political power and military direction. And this ſame jealouſy it was that ſet our company upon the ſcheme, of which we have been treating.—For when it was propoſed in a general court, by ſome well-meaning proprietors, that, ſeeing they themſelves were altogether incapable of procuring a number of Europeans ſufficient to recruit and reſtore their force, reduced by the late prepoſterous war, they ſhould apply to government for a ſupply of two regiments, this motion was immediately overruled

ruled: not for that it was not proper and neceſſary to the intereſt of the company, but becauſe the temporary ſovereigns foreſaw from it ſome diſtant danger to their own importance: ſeeing that an application of this nature, might have appeared as a conceſſion of their own incapacity, to execute the charge of maintaining and defending thoſe dominions; which might have produced a farther inquiry: they likewiſe perceived that the commanding officer of thoſe two regiments would, by his rank, be entitled to the command in chief; and from that circumſtance they apprehended the following conſequences; that this officer would not be ſo ſervilely dependent on their ſovereign power; that he muſt, by virtue of his office, hold a ſeat

a ſeat in their councils; and that government might, poſſibly, by his means acquire ſome intimation of the deep myſteries of their policy. For theſe reaſons it was declared by one of theſe mercantile ſovereigns that, "in this emergency, it would be more *ſalutary* to truſt to an augmentation of the native force." But it is evident that this meaſure could not poſſibly be meant as *ſalutary* to the well-being and ſafety of that object which the nation hath committed to their charge; it being the very meaſure that creates danger: we muſt, therefore, underſtand it to have been meant as *ſalutary* to the exiſtence of their own momentary power.

However, it is altogether unneceſſary to deduce or prove this

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jealous diſtinction, made by the company betwixt their own power or intereſt and that of the nation, from any particular act or part of their conduct; ſeeing, that they do not ſcruple, upon every occaſion, to openly and avowedly pronounce the executive government of the nation (which, as it cannot poſſibly in this caſe be diſtinguiſhed from the nation itſelf, doth actually imply the nation) their enemy: and the fear of this enemy (the nation) who is repreſented as lying in wait to take all advantages, ſerves, in the mouths of this company's demagogues, as a bugbear to ſilence every motion that may tend to the diminution of their own power.

Moreover, in all their tranſactions with government, they deport

deport themſelves, not like ſubjects to their ſupreme, nor like agents to their conſtituent, nay not even like one independent power treating with another of equal dignity; but like a haughty ſuperior ſtate, impoſing its commands, or making its demands, upon a puny ſubſidiary.

Nor do we hold forth this with a view of exciting indignation or reſentment againſt the company; we repreſent facts, producing danger; to the end that this danger may be obviated: but, at the ſame time, ſhould be extremely glad to palliate this unreaſonable conduct of the company. In extenuation of which, we ſhall obſerve, that we are not to conſider their preſent deportment as the act of that reſpectable

ſpectable body of men, THE UNITED COMPANY OF ENGLISH MERCHANTS TRADING TO THE EAST INDIES; we muſt regard it as the act of a wicked, ambitious, and avaricious cabal, of a few men; who have been enabled, by the defective conſtitution of the company, (defective, indeed, in reſpect of political government) and, by virtue of wealth, moſtly plundered from thoſe miſerable foreign dominions, to eſtabliſh a tyranny over the company itſelf, ſo very deſpotic and abſolute, as to render it entirely ſubſervient to their own views; which are ſo directly oppoſite to the true intereſt of the company and of their country, that the declared enemies of this ſtate could not poſſibly wiſh theſe

matters to be conducted upon a plan more adapted to their purpoſe : inſomuch, that there is certain ground of ſuſpicion, that theſe enemies have employed means, which the ſame conſtitution of the company affords them, to aid and abet the views of thoſe men, which do thus exactly tally and coincide with their own.*

For if the government of France had, itſelf, the choice, could it poſſibly place this branch of our concerns upon a footing more convenient for its own purpoſe

* We are, however, far from joining in the opinion that theſe enemies have employed their intereſt to ſtrengthen the party of a certain director, who is ſaid to be ſupported by government : it being much more natural to imagine that theſe enemies would ſtudy to foment the animoſity of the company againſt the government.

purpoſe, than to have the maintenance and defence of thoſe dominions aſſigned, without limitation or controul, to a body of merchants; who, being themſelves totally deficient of power to furniſh the means of defence, are, at the ſame time, ſo extremely jealous of their dignity, as not ſimply to evade co-operating with that power which alone can ſupply thoſe means, but even to ſet this power at defiance; and to reject, with diſdain and indignation, every advance of aid and aſſiſtance, however neceſſary, provided it carries the moſt diſtant appearance of interfering with their own importance? Or could France herſelf deſire that this nation ſhould be more completely deceived or impoſed upon, with re-

ſpect to the ſtate of defence in thoſe dominions, than ſhe was on the very laſt occaſion that this point fell under the examination of her legiſlative government, when it was declared in the face of that auguſt aſſembly, that the company did, at that preſent, maintain, in her ſeveral Indian poſſeſſions, an army of 17,000 Europeans? whilſt the government of France was more truly informed that the company had little more than a third part of that number of ſoldiers; and that if ſhe was even to reckon upon all the Europeans of every denomination reſiding in her ſeveral ſettlements, (excluding the crews of thoſe ſhips which paſs from and to England, and whom they ſurely cannot paſs upon us for either reſidentiaries or ſoldiers)

diers) they would not amount to one half of this number, thus boldly delivered in as a true report ; and which, no one took upon him to either contradict, diſpute, or examine.—Nor is France ignorant that this very inadequate force hath been, by the late prudent ſchemes of the company, ſtill farther diminiſhed.

And can France herſelf wiſh that theſe ſeveral cauſes ſhould produce a more *ſalutary* effect, than that, when ſhe comes to diſpatch her force, which ſhe hath for ſome years been collecting, to the conqueſt of Bengal, ſhe ſhould meet with a free and uninterrupted paſſage by ſea ; and when ſhe comes to diſembark ſhe ſhall find herſelf oppoſed, not by a body of 4000 Europeans

Europeans (the number requiſite on ſuch occaſion) awing and ſupporting an army of well-affected natives; and the whole commanded by leaders of able and ſound direction, capable of improving every advantage of ſituation: but by a body of probably leſs than 1500 Europeans, intimidated and diſcouraged, by not only the vaſt ſuperiority of the enemy, but by the mutinous ſpirit of the ſepoy force, to which the company hath thought proper to confide the defence of that ineſtimable dominion at the very time ſhe is uſing means to alienate their affections, and who will, no doubt, take this opportunity to expreſs their reſentment; whilſt the charge ſhall be directed by leaders, weak in themſelves

ſelves, and ſo diſtracted by ſurrounding difficulties that every advantage of ſituation will be neglected.

But let not Britain ſhut her eyes to the conſequences flowing from ſuch a deprivation of this dominion: let her conſider that, by this event, ſhe will ſuffer the loſs of, not only her preſent dedomagement, and the acceſſion of wealth made by that branch of commerce and by private fortunes; but ſhe will, alſo, be cut off from that revenue, which is raiſed on the conſumpt of thoſe Indian commodities; a reſource the moſt equitable, and, therefore, the moſt convenient of any, as being levied upon downright luxury; and which ſhe will, in the height of an expenſive war, be obliged to

to transfer upon abſolute neceſſaries: whilſt, at the ſame time, ſhe will be drained of vaſt ſums, employed by individuals, to purchaſe from France theſe Indian commodities, of which ſhe will then be the ſole vender. Nay even all this is but the leaſt half of the evil; for theſe ſeveral loſſes to her, will become advantage in the ſcale of her enemy: advantages ſo very glaring, that ſhe cannot poſſibly be blind to them; and ſo very alluring that, was ſhe otherwiſe unprovided, or averſe to war, this alone is ſufficient to tempt her: for, it is certain, that France may, by proper management, draw from thoſe dominions more than double the benefit received by the government of Britain.

Nor

Nor let Britain deceive herſelf with the vain hopes of readily and eaſily reclaiming this conqueſt from her enemy. Bengal is not an open and acceſſible country: the advantages of ſituation we have deſcribed: and though neither theſe, nor any other advantages, can avail to a power that is negligent, or incapable of improving them; yet, in the hands of an active and ſkilful defendant, they may ſerve to baffle the utmoſt efforts of a conſiderably ſuperior force.

This is a ſubject that demands ſtill farther explanation: and we could proceed to diſcover other defects in the preſent ſyſtem of defence, was it not that, by pointing out our own particular weakneſſes, we might

ſeem to direct the attempt of an enemy. A reaſon that may induce ſome to imagine that we have already diſcloſed too much: but it muſt be obſerved, that we have, hitherto, advanced nothing that is not already known to that enemy. We ſhall, however, deſiſt here; hoping that what hath been already ſaid will ſuffice to evince, that this moſt important branch of national intereſt ſtands in the moſt imminent danger of being wreſted from us, by either our natural enemy, in Europe; or, otherwiſe, by the native powers in India.

Nor is it poſſible to obviate this danger, ſo long as the maintenance and defence of thoſe dominions is entruſted to the company. For if we ſhould

even

even ſuppoſe that this company could diveſt herſelf of that ſelfiſh, jealous, and ambitious diſtinction, which is inſeparable from the nature of her condition, ſo as that ſhe ſhould candidly diſcloſe her neceſſities, and otherwiſe cordially co-operate with government; yet, ſo long as the charge remains proper to the company, we cannot expect that government will afford the ſame degree of attention to that ſubject, which, to it, is, in this caſe, a ſort of foreign concern, for which it is not reſponſible, as it would do, was this a branch of its own department.— No! government will ever truſt, in a great meaſure, to the company, which bears the name, though in every reſpect unequal to the charge: and

thus betwixt the two, it will be totally neglected.

Nay if we could even get over theſe naturally inſuperable difficulties; and were to ſuppoſe that the company ſhould, on her part, ſincerely, honeſtly, and exactly communicate with government; and that, on the other part, government ſhould exert its whole might to ſupply whatever means of defence might be required by the company, yet the application of theſe means is ſtill left to the wiſe and diſcreet conduct of the company's ſubſtitutes in India, ſuch as they have been deſcribed; to be by them waſted in mock wars: ſo as that, when danger arrives, thoſe dominions ſhall be found in a ſtate equally defenceleſs as if they had been neglected by government: or if the

the force ſhall be ſufficient, it ſhall, by weak and puſillanimous conduct, be rendered uſeleſs.

It is, therefore, evident, that if Britain intends to ſecure to herſelf the poſſeſſion of this valuable object; or if ſhe inclines to prevent its becoming an acceſſion to the formidable power of a dangerous rival, ſhe muſt conſign the charge, of maintaining and defending it, to her own government; becauſe it alone is capable of duly executing this charge; as being poſſeſſed, in a plenary degree, of that power and ability to furniſh the neceſſary means of defence, which are utterly wanting to the company; and alſo as being totally exempted from all thoſe defects, which are inherent and redundant

in

in the conſtitution of the company.

For we need not repeat that, in reſpect to naval force, the company is radically deficient; as not having a ſingle ſhip of the line. Whereas the executive government hath the direction of the whole naval force of Great Britain. And as to land force, we find that the ways and means employed by the company to levy it, prove altogether inſufficient; and that, in conſequence thereof, ſhe is induced to have recourſe to methods which, inſtead of aſcertaining, do actually create a danger to the exiſtence of this dominion. Whilſt the executive government can never be at ſuch loſs, ſo long as Britain can furniſh ſoldiers; and can, therefore, ſupply whatever

ever number of European troops may be neceſſary to the purpoſe of maintenance and defence, on either ordinary or extraordinary occaſions; without being obliged to confide, farther than it ſees convenient, in the dangerous ſervice of a native force.

So long as this charge remains in the hands of the company, every meaſure of any import to the government or defence of thoſe dominions, is liable to be canvaſſed by a general court of proprietors; where, the enemies of their country, holding a voice in theſe aſſemblies, do gain an opportunity of not only informing themſelves of all ſuch meaſures, but even of forming a party to controul every *ſalutary* propoſal, and to promote thoſe that are bad: for there are

men

men concerned in the company's affairs who are wicked enough to forward ſuch purpoſes; and who, acting ſuch a part, may very naturally conſider the nation as their enemy. Theſe proprietors have alſo a right to call for all papers of intelligence; and, thereby, theſe ſame enemies gain occaſion to inform themſelves of the ſtate of affairs in thoſe dominions. Now theſe defects are ſo very extravagant, that they alone are ſufficient to ruin a government otherwiſe ſtrong.

But in the hands of the nation, the immediate direction of this defence would be committed to a diſtinct board of a few men; who would be obliged to communicate with only the ſupreme executive government. And by this means our enemies would

would be effectually precluded from their preſent opportunity of obtaining intelligence, and of embroiling our meaſures: whilſt government would, inſtead of the falſe information delivered in by the company, receive a juſt and exact report of the ſtate of affairs in thoſe dominions.

By the preſent abſurd ſyſtem the charge of this important branch of national intereſt is committed to a body, which, as it is continually fluctuating and changing in not only its executive but conſtituent parts, is to the nation, in this reſpect, No Body. For a body of this nature can be ſubjected to no ſpecies of penalty, not even of honour or reputation: becauſe the company and its direction of this year, cannot be accounta-

ble for the meaſures of laſt year. So that this valuable property of the nation, being entruſted to a ſet of men, who can afford her no kind of ſecurity, neither real nor ſpeculative, for their juſt deportment; who are reſtrained by no immediate check; and who are not reponſible to her, in future, for their meaſures; this property is liable to be, by them, waſted or ruined with impunity.

Whereas, if the nation ſhall herſelf aſſume this charge, the execution of it will be devolved on the ſame ſhoulders as ſupport the burthen of all her other concerns: and, of conſequence, this part will be treated with the ſame degree of attention as any of the others: and he nation will then have ſecurity

curity for her property, in not only the honour and reputation of the party entruſted; but alſo in that this party is reſponſible for meaſures to the grand council of the nation.

With regard to the immediate direction or execution of this charge, in India, we need not obſerve, that government, conſcious of its own dignity, importance, and authority, would employ men of talents, ſkill, and even rank, equal to ſuch a mighty charge.

We have now finiſhed our review of that ſyſtem of government which Britain hath permitted to be eſtabliſhed in her Indian dominion: and have, in this review, pointed out ſuch defects, in both the political and military department, as cannot

fail, whether we ſuppoſe war or peace, of producing either a total deprivation or final ruin of the object. For that, in the caſe of war, it is liable, through the utter incapacity and jealous ſelfiſhneſs of the party entruſted, to be wreſted from Britain, by the firſt aſſault of an European enemy; or, if ſpared by them, it muſt, unavoidably fall into the hands of the natives: and that, in the caſe of peace, it will be quickly impoveriſhed of its wealth, and deſpoiled of its commerce, by the rapacity and oppreſſion of its preſent government. We have likewiſe evinced that theſe evils cannot poſſibly be prevented by any other means than by the government's aſſuming this charge into her own hands: we have demonſtrated that

that this change of government will actually obviate theſe evils: and we have minutely deſcribed the nature of that remedy which it will afford to each particular defect.

As there is no alternative, betwixt the abſolute loſs of the object and the execution of ſuch meaſure, there can be no room for choice; ſhould ſuch meaſure be attended with ſome immediate loſs to one or other of the parties. But, as this is not the caſe, as no one of theſe parties can be a loſer, but, on the contrary will each of them be gainers, by the change, it cannot certainly admit of heſitation.

And that the three parties concerned in this object, namely the Britiſh nation, the native ſubjects of the dependent dominions, and the

the Engliſh Eaſt India company, will, each of them, be gainers by this change of government, can be readily evinced, from inſpecting the ſituation in which their affairs will then ſtand; and by comparing that with the preſent.

Firſt, for the Eaſt India company, which will, no doubt, be the complaining, becauſe ſhe will reckon herſelf the loſing, party, we ſhall make it appear, that what ſhe loſes is only ſhew; and that ſhe will, in lieu of that ſhew, acquire a real and ſubſtantial benefit.

For ſeeing, as is demonſtrable by many unanſwerable arguments, that the Indian commerce muſt, of neceſſity, be conducted by a company; and ſeeing, alſo, that the preſent company hath ever, *in her mercantile*

cantile capacity, deported herſelf with propriety, we take it for granted, that this company will ever continue to be indulged by the nation with the privilege of that commerce. Now the true criterion of this company's gain or benefit, is the dividend upon her ſtock: which, at preſent, is 11½ per cent. nor is there the leaſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that, were we even to bar all accidents to the ſovereignty, ſhe would ever divide above 12: though there is ſufficient ground to imagine that ſhe would ſoon be obliged to diminiſh. But this company did, previous to her engaging in the politics of India, particularly in thoſe of the coaſt of Cormondel, divide 8 per cent. by her commerce: ſo that theſe mighty ſums, which are received from the

the ſovereignty, may be ſaid to have created an addition to her dividend of only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. the remainder being expended on purpoſes, either neceſſary, or otherwiſe. It is likewiſe certain, that the commerce of the company could, at this preſent juncture, equally as on that former occaſion, afford a dividend of 8 per cent. provided her expence was reduced to exactly the ſame ſtate on which it ſtood at that former period. However the company was obliged, even at that time, to maintain, for her particular ſecurity in India, ſeveral fortified factories, together with ſome military force; becauſe ſhe could not truſt implicitly to the protection of the native princes: and the annual charge of theſe

theſe factories and force muſt have amounted to 5 or 6 per cent. on her ſtock. But in caſe of the nation's aſſuming the defence of thoſe dominions, her protection would be as effectually complete to the company, in India, as it is in Britain: and the company would be thereby ſpared, if not from the whole, yet from the heavieſt part, of that military charge, which ſhe was obliged to expend in her purely commercial ſtate. This ſaving which we ſhall ſuppoſe to be equal to 4 per cent. being added to her ancient dividend of 8 per cent. would ſtill preſerve her annual dividend at 12 per cent.—Moreover, the company would receive from the nation, a certain equivalent, for her military apparatus in India; which is, at preſent,

not only a dead ſtock, but a moſt precarious dead ſtock · and this dead ſtock being, by ſuch equivalent, converted into quick ſtock, would advance the dividend conſiderably above 12 per cent. for a purely commercial dividend would never be reſtrained by government.

At preſent, the company's entire ſtock is continually at the moſt deſperate riſque; ſo that, notwithſtanding the high dividend, and every art and influence uſed to keep up the price, it fluctuates from 230 to 200, whilſt, in fact, it ſtands upon ſuch a rotten foundation, that 10 years purchaſe may be above the real value: whereas, if thoſe countries were protected by government, the company's ſtock would return to be the moſt permanent

of

of any; and would, therefore, be worth its intrinſic purchaſe; which, at only 12 per cent. would be 300.

But beſides this advance in the value of her ſtock; which is, of itſelf, a ſufficient benefit to the company, ſhe would reap many other advantages, by relinquiſhing this, to her unnatural charge: ſuch as, being delivered from that ſtate of factious rancorous rage, and inſatiable avidity; which hath rendered her a ruinous plague to herſelf, a grievous nuiſance to this nation, and the dreadful ſcourge and heavy oppreſſor of thoſe harmleſs Indians: and being reſtored to her ancient ſtate of honeſt induſtry, and innocent tranquility; when ſhe would again become the quiet and uſeful member of her own

ſociety, and a general benefactor to others.

Such then, being the turbulent, precarious, and ruinous ſituation of the company's affairs, at preſent; and ſuch being the firm, quiet, and truly beneficial footing, on which they would ſtand, when diſentangled from this foreign and monſtrous ſovereign connection; ſhe ought, if ſhe underſtands and reſpects her own real intereſt, as either a diſtinct body of merchants, or as a part of this community at large, to be the firſt in ſupplicating government to reſcue her from that impending ruin, which muſt, otherwiſe, very ſpeedily, cruſh her to annihilation; and violently ſhock the conſtitution of that community.

With

With reſpect to the nation, ſhe receives, at preſent, from thoſe dominions, the benefit derived from commerce; the 400, 000 l. dedomagement; and the acceſſion of wealth, made by private fortunes. As to the commerce, that is here to be put out of the queſtion: becauſe the change of government would make no alteration in it; unleſs for the better, by enabling the company to attend more ſtrictly to her traffic.— And for the private fortunes, Britain cannot poſſibly conſider them as a benefit; for wealth, acquired by rapine, and the ruin of a dependent dominion, which would, otherwiſe, contribute the ſame wealth voluntarily, and immediately to the ſovereign, by means leſs prejudicial to herſelf,

may

may be truly ſaid to be doubly plundered from that ſovereign: but being expended, by thoſe who poſſeſs it, to purpoſes ſo very pernicious, it becomes a curſe, inſtead of a benefit. Indeed Britain is, in more reſpects than one, a grievous ſufferer by thoſe Indian private fortunes. It muſt alſo be remembered, that thoſe private fortunes can laſt no longer, than while thoſe countries can afford to yield them; which may not be above two years longer. The dedomagement is ſtill more tranſitory, as depending upon, not only the ſame circumſtances, but upon one other, yet more immediate, even the inſufficiency of the company itſelf to pay it: and, at any rate, this dedomagement will ceaſe in the caſe of a French war; when

it

it is moſt particularly neceſſary to the nation.

But if the nation ſhall, herſelf, aſſume the charge of governing and defending this dominion, her account with it will ſtand thus.—We have, in our account current of the annual ſpecie income of Bengal, aſſigned the ſum of 835,000l. as the annual balance of her commerce: nevertheleſs, as we did there, intentionally, exceed, we ſhall here ſuppoſe that balance to be only 700,000l. Now this being a clear annual acceſſion of ſpecie, it is plain that Bengal can afford to diſpenſe with ſo much, without encroaching on her capital ſtock of wealth. But, over and above this ſpecie ſum, Bengal can furniſh, *gratis*, the company's whole ſpecie inveſtment

ment of merchandize; which we have reckoned to be 250,000l.* though if it ſhould exceed that ſum it would be ſo much addition of gain to Britain, (provided ſuch exceſs did not ariſe from a decreaſe of the European exports;) and Bengal could ſtill afford it, without detriment to herſelf. Theſe two ſums, in ſpecie and merchandize, making 950,000l. is the amount of what Bengal can afford to ſpare; and ſo much Britain can, therefore

* We mean that this inveſtment is furniſhed by Bengal *gratis*; becauſe notwithſtanding it is actually paid for in ſpecie, yet that payment is made from her own revenue: for, out of the ſurplus revenue collected, government would advance to the company, to be replaced or otherwiſe accounted for by her in Britain, a ſum equal to her ſpecie inveſtment, or 250,000l. which ſum, being thus refunded to Bengal, would reduce her ſpecie tribute, or annual drain of wealth to 700,000l. exactly correſponding with her annual ſpecie income.

fore venture to draw from her, at preſent; though no more, through any means.* So that we muſt, out of this ſum of 950,000 l. allow ſomething for private fortunes, which will ever ſubſiſt, in a certain degree: but, under a regular government, they may certainly be reduced to 200,000 l. per annum

* This then ought to be the rule of managing the finances of that dominion;—if the ſurplus revenue, after defraying all manner of government charges, ſhall exceed (as it will at preſent) the ſum which Britain intends to draw from Bengal, in ſpecie and merchandize, for the public account, and which we have (as above) ſuppoſed to be 750,000l. then ought ſuch exceſs of ſurplus revenue to be either totally remitted; or, if collected, it ought to be expended in the country, in ſuch manner as may be beneficial to her commerce.

num* : and there will then remain for the public treaſury of Britain, the annual ſum of 750, 000l. inſtead of the preſent 400,000l. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that the ſum, here ſpecified, is limited thus low, as ſuppoſing Bengal to be, at preſent, exhauſted of her wealth, and

* It may be ſaid, that it will be extremely difficult to reduce the private fortunes, from the preſent enormous degree, to the ſmall ſum we have allotted. And we ſhall admit that ſo far as hath been hitherto pointed out, the diſtance of ſituation will ſtill afford, to even a national governor, opportunities which, though they will be nothing equal to the abuſes of the company's ſervants, may yet be inconſiſtent with a regular oeconomy. But we muſt obſerve that there is a plain and eaſy meaſure, which, when carried into execution, will effectually provide againſt every inconvenience ariſing from the diſtance of ſituation, in reſpect of, not only financial oeconomy, but of political governmert, and the general ſtate of defence in that quarter.

and impaired in her commerce: but ſo ſoon as this commerce ſhall be reſtored by a regular government, then can Britain augment her ſpecie tribute; for the annual balance of commerce muſt ever be the rule of this tribute.*

But

* Under this head we take no notice of Madraſs, and the territory annexed to it; nor of the other poſſeſſions in India, becauſe that forms a diſtinct ſubject. We ſhall only obſerve, that the company's plan of government in the province of ARCOT, is ſtill more ridiculouſly abſurd than that of Bengal: for, if taken in one ſenſe, it is greatly too extenſive; if in the other, it is as much confined.—The political government, if anarchy deſerves that name, veſted in a native nabob, who is void of authority; the collection and diſpoſal of the revenues aſſigned to the ſame prince, who hath, notwithſtanding, been, through the uſurious management of the company's ſervants, often reduced to the want of common neceſſaries; and as to the charge of defence, that reſts entirely

But the eſſential difference is, that, under ſuch management as we have here propoſed, this dominion could continue to make payment of thoſe ſums, to Britain, *in perpetuum*; whereas, under the company's inſatiable government, it is not likely to laſt two years. Alſo, under protection

entirely upon the company.—In ſhort, this plan of government ſeems to be, if not intentionally, yet really intricated in ſuch a manner, that no part of the benefit ariſing from it ſhould arrive at the company, but that the whole ſhould reſt with individuals. Whilſt the nation of Britain hath been obliged to ſupport with her blood, for about 25 years paſt, an almoſt uninterrupted ſeries of wars: during which time, the natives of thoſe countries have been harraſſed, plundered, and ruined; equally by friends as by foes. Nevertheleſs, we ſhall, hereafter, ſhew, how this dominion, at preſent, a grievous load to Britain, may be rendered really beneficial to her; and how the preſent exceſſive military eſtabliſhment may be reduced within proper bounds

tion of the national government, this dominion, and all its benefits, would be perfectly aſcertained from danger: whereas, under the company's government, they ſtand in hourly danger of being wreſted from us, by enemies.

As to the natives of Bengal, they would be the greateſt gainers by this change of government, in being reſcued from their preſent ruinous and anarchial deſpotiſm: and in being reſtored to the bleſſings of a regular government; under which, they would freely proſecute their manufactures and commerce; and be thereby enabled to make richer returns to their benefactor, the nation of Britain.

Seeing, therefore, that the nation's taking upon herſelf the charge

charge of this government, will not only prevent all thoſe ruinous conſequences, that muſt, otherwiſe, unavoidably enſue; but will likewiſe produce great and ſolid advantages, to each of the three parties concerned in that object, we cannot perceive any rational ground of objection to it. Nevertheleſs, objections muſt be expected: and the firſt will, no doubt, come from that cabal of a few men, who, having been permitted to ſeize, into their own hands and for their own behoof, this ſovereignty, conſider it as lawful plunder; and will, therefore, be moſt outrageouſly incenſed againſt a propoſal, tending to ſnatch from them their prey. But to theſe we ſhall anſwer, that, notwithſtanding they have uſurped the name,

as

as well as the authority, of the company, they will never be conſidered in that character by the nation: and as their views are ſo directly oppoſite to the intereſt of the whole community, their clamour, at diſappointment, ought to be totally diſregarded.

There may likewiſe be objections made, to government's aſſuming this charge, by ſome who may apprehend danger to the conſtitution, from the additional influence it may be ſuppoſed to lend to the crown. Now, if there ſhall be any ſo obſtinately perverſe, as to chuſe that this moſt important object ſhould be abſolutely and finally loſt to their country, rather than that it ſhould be preſerved under the poſſibility of government's reaping ſome ſmall

ſmall benefit from it, we can only compare ſuch men to that furious madman who, to ſpite his wife, cut off his own genitals.—But to thoſe who may be rationally and conſcientiouſly apprehenſive of ſuch danger, we ſhall reply, that it is ever in the power of the conſtitution, to provide a remedy againſt any danger ariſing to it, from within itſelf: but that, if this valuable property ſhall be loſt to the nation, it may be out of her power to either recover it, or to avoid the danger, ariſing to her liberty and independence, from this loſs becoming an acceſſion to the power of her dangerous rival. And, to theſe, we ſhall farther add, that, notwithſtanding we have no reaſon to apprehend ſiniſter deſigns from our preſent government, (and for that very reaſon

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we ought to be the leſs ſcrupulous in truſting it) yet a deſigning miniſter, or even an artful and ambitious private man, hath the opportunity of employing this ſovereignty, while in the hands of the company, to purpoſes far more dangerous to the conſtitution, than if the charge was entruſted to the executive government at large.

But the executive government itſelf, may probably be backward in aſſuming this charge, as apprehending that, in the preſent turbulent ſituation of affairs, it may add to their embarraſs.—In anſwer to this we ſhall obſerve, that government, by continuing this charge to the company, doth render that a heavy burden, which, in its own hands, would be but light. For whilſt this charge is entruſted to the company, government muſt

neceſſarily act one of theſe two parts; it muſt either devolve the entire direction upon the company; which is the ſame thing as conſigning the object to chance; and which is again, in a regular progreſſion, the ſame as yielding it up to certain deprivation: or, otherwiſe, government muſt beſtow on this concern, ſuch a degree of attention, as ſhall ſuffice to aſcertain it from both political and military danger.

Now, in the firſt of theſe two caſes, it is plain that government would fail in its duty to the nation; which hath veſted it with ſupreme power, and hath committed to it the abſolute truſt of this, as well as as of all her other concerns: and, for this very reaſon, government would ſtand equally culpable, in the eye of the nation, ſhould

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that concern be loſt through the inſufficiency of the company, as if it had itſelf aſſumed the charge, and loſt it through its own proper neglect; ſeeing, the nation is ſenſible that, if government did not aſſume this charge, it was not becauſe it could not, but becauſe it would not: ſo that here is no room for evaſion. However, we are not to imagine that government propoſes availing itſelf of ſuch flimſy excuſes: and we muſt, therefore, ſuppoſe that it would exert itſelf vigorouſly to preſerve, maintain, and defend this concern, under the direction of the company. But, to do this effectually, will demand, from government, not that ſingle degree of attention and of force which is abſolutely neceſſary, or juſtly requiſite; but, all this augmented, to above a double proportion,

tion, by the perverſeneſs, ſelfiſhneſs, and incapacity of the company herſelf, and by the ſtill more prepoſterous conduct of her deputies in India. And thus government, by ſupporting this concern in the hands of the company, doth, at the leaſt, double to itſelf that embarraſs which is proper to the object: and doth, at the ſame time, render itſelf reponſible for meaſures, which it doth not, becauſe it will not, direct.

But let not government apprehend any ſuch difficulty in the execution of this charge: to govern an Indian nation is not a taſk of ſuch delicacy, as is the ruling Europeans: a moſt convincing proof of which is, that the government of that rich, extenſive, and populous kingdom, Bengal, hath been for ſeveral years ſuſtained (at leaſt in ſome

ſome ſhape) by the ſervants of the Engliſh Eaſt India company. Men properly qualified to form a board for directing this charge in Britain, may, at this preſent, be eaſily found : and a few perſons, of even ordinary talents, diſpatched to India, with proper inſtructions and authority, will, in the ſpace of a very few months, if we even ſuppoſe them to have been ſtrangers to the country, render themſelves far more complete maſters of the ſubject of government there, than are the naturally incapable deputies of the company. But one or two years will make this branch familiar to government.—And we can farther affirm, that the meaſure which we have hinted at, and which, though unfit for the public eye, ſhall be ſpeedily ſubmitted to the conſideration of thoſe who have

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the power of executing it, will ſerve to place this Indian charge in a tract as juſtly regular, and as plain and ſimple, as any the moſt common concern in the diſtrict of government: though it is here proper to add, that the nations ſpeedily aſſuming this charge into her own hands, is a ſtep previous to that meaſure; and, likewiſe, immediately neceſſary; as otherwiſe a plan for recovering, inſtead of improving, will be requiſite.

We have now accompliſhed our undertaking: we have illuſtrated the value of the Britiſh dominion in India: we have explained the defects, political as well as military, of that ſyſtem of government which Britain hath permitted to be eſtabliſhed there; and have evinced that theſe defects are ſuch, as muſt, unavoidably, produce, either

either the total ruin, or final deprivation, of this dominion, and of all the benefits accruing from it: we have pointed out the dangerous conſequences, ariſing to the power and independence of Britain, from her ſuffering this loſs to become an acceſſion to the wealth, commerce, and naval power of her natural enemy: we have demonſtrated that theſe dangerous conſequences cannot poſſibly be prevented, by any other means, than by government's taking upon itſelf the charge of governing, maintaining, and defending that dominion: and we have ſhewn, that this change of government will be productive of great and ſolid advantages to the nation, and likewiſe to the Eaſt India company.

As our arguments are founded on truth and reaſon, we doubt not that

that they will convince. But if, in ſpite of conviction, there ſhall be men found ſo very wicked, as to attempt tying up the hands of government, ſo as to prevent it from interpoſing itſelf betwixt the nation and this danger to her liberty and independence; and if government ſhall ſuffer its hands to be thus tyed up; then is our ſituation deplorable, indeed!—— Happen what will, we have diſcharged that duty which, as an individual, we owe to our country, by ſounding this TRUE ALARM, and warning her of danger.

FINIS.